

The Papacy

Its Origins and Historical Evolution

by PAOLO BREZZI

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Introduction

This book is not intended to be a history of the popes, narrating even briefly the life and activities of each individual titular; neither is it an enumeration of the religious, political, civil and cultural undertakings initiated by the popes or developed under their leadership. The immense quantity of such material could not possibly have been brought within the scope of this volume. Nor are there wanting works of this type, more or less voluminous and reliable.

The aim of this study, instead, is to trace the evolution of the papacy—specifically, the historical development of the papal institution as seen against the setting of its various periods and exemplified by its more typical representatives—in order to ascertain whether its perennial existence is the result of favorable historical circumstances, of cleverness and intrigue, or of an element of consistency and inevitable continuance inherent to the institution itself. In this book, references to persons and events presuppose that the reader is generally familiar with them and that he will consult larger works if he desires more extensive details. In view of the nature of this study, we cannot be expected to demonstrate the validity of the principles upon which the papacy rests; that is, the possibility and the fact of a revelation, the intention of Christ to establish a Church, the

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characteristics of such a society, and like points. But, assuming these as demonstrated, we shall see that ever since the beginning of the papacy a principle was laid down which, under the force of circumstances and not without contrasts, evolved in the course of the centuries with a logical application and an ever-increasing influence. This principle consists of a special power that is maintained in the Church by virtue of a lawful succession to the head of the apostolic college, and is made the standard of all the activities of the faithful and of the priestly hierarchy. It stems from the concept of "vicariousness," which, whether the proper corresponding term is expressed or not, constitutes the foundation of papal activities and furnishes the light in which these are explained and understood.

Disregarding the better-known but less essential aspects of this institution (a complexity of tasks performed in the most diversified fields of human endeavor), the central fact remains that pontiffs exist, rule and promote activities as representatives of Christ, whom they perpetuate visibly down through history. It is quite true that for a long time there were no such close ties of dependence between clergy and pontiff as exist today; nor did local Christian communities always feel strongly in their loyalty to Rome or accept its controls. But such facts do not in any way invalidate our position, because what really matters is to establish whether the transition of the papacy from its ancient to its modern status is a natural evolution of a vital germ, or an innovation and an arbitrary usurpation.

Hence, it would seem that a study of the evolution of the papal dogma, or the tracing of the doctrinal history of papal primacy and the progressive development of the idea of papal authority, represents perhaps the most important and delicate aspect of this subject. It must be noted, however, that, in recognizing the validity of the titles claimed by the pontiffs in favor of their position, we must recognize the fact that offices

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and powers in the Church are not an end in themselves but are destined to the edification of the entire body of Christ and the sanctification of its members. It follows, then, that those in office must always govern with a spirit of charity, with the spirit of love which serves and gives of itself, not to dominate others or increase personal gain, but which is preoccupied with raising everyone to communion with God.

The organization in the Church is similar to the framework of a house or to the skeleton of a body—serving, that is, to keep the structure solidly together, without being able to give life by itself alone or even to claim exclusiveness of representation. With this perspective in view and with a consciousness matured amid the crisis of contemporary thinking, modern man accepts the pontifical magisterium (supreme teaching power) and acknowledges its advantages. He recognizes that it is no humiliation to bow before its authority; on the contrary, he sees the possibilities of his being enhanced and the prerogatives of his personality fully realized.*

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* For reasons of convenience, the terms "pope" and "papacy" will be used even when referring to the first centuries, though we are aware of the anachronism. In fact, from the third to the fourth centuries, the term "pope" was a title given to all bishops as a sign of respect; and even when it was restricted to the Bishop of Rome, it still carried for a long time the qualification *Urbis*, "of Rome." As to the term "papacy," it was only Leo of Ostia who introduced it in the twelfth century. Our earlier use of it will be excused for reasons of brevity.

1. The Mission Entrusted to the Apostles

Besides arousing interest and, often, even enthusiasm among the crowds of listeners, the preaching of Jesus could not fail to attract a certain number of disciples into the fellowship of "the Prophet." Moreover, the unmistakable objective of His preaching—the establishment of the kingdom of heaven—necessitated the launching of a visible society with an organization different from that of Jewish society. The dissimilarity between the two grew more pronounced as the hostility of the leaders of old Israel steadily increased. And if on one hand official Judaism's opposition caused some defections among the more voluble and casual followers, on the other it helped determine the nature of the new institution itself. The original and fundamental structure of the "kingdom" consisted of a steady and well-defined nucleus of twelve persons who were to be the foundation of "the Church," the salt of the earth, the light of the world. These twelve men whom the Evangelist Luke alone calls "the Apostles"—a term which was to spread more in the Greek centers than among the Jews—clearly stand out in the gospels as an exclusive group (they appear thirty

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times together) entrusted with a mission. In fact, at the death of one of them, under circumstances which all knew, they hastened to replace him in order to keep intact the original number, which was full of symbolical meaning for every good Israelite.

2. Gospel Texts on the Primacy

The manner in which Jesus selected the Twelve is described in a general way in the gospels, but this is of little interest at the moment. What, instead, the reading of these passages brings out in all its clarity is the Master's intention to establish a hierarchy even within the group and His wish to place all the others under the authority of one individual, Simon Peter, whose duty it will be to act as His direct representative. Even when the Apostles were left to themselves, no one took that individual to task for making important decisions with regard to the life of the community or for speaking to strangers in the name of all. All this fitted in with a preordained plan whose fundamental lines we shall endeavor to bring out.

Like many of their countrymen, a certain John's two sons, Simon and Andrew, natives of Bethsaida, worked at their well-paying job as fishermen at Capharnaum, a city near their birthplace. Simon was typical of the authentic Israelite, hard-working and intelligent, bighearted and sprightly, brought up on faith and genuine piety. His faith moved him to seek out the Messias promised by the prophets, but first he ran to the shores of the Jordan to hear John the Baptist's call to penance. And when Andrew had related his meeting with the Messias, Simon quickly rose and went to see Jesus and, having believed in Him at once, became one of the first followers of the new "Rabbi." On His journeys to the towns on the shores of Lake Gennesareth, Jesus used to make His quarters in the house where Simon

lived with his wife and his mother-in-law. Since He did this so often, it could be said that the gospel—the proclamation of the good news—had its beginning there.

Upon their very first meeting, Jesus hinted at something special for Simon by changing his name; and, whereas the names Jesus gave the other disciples did not replace their original ones, that given to Simon caught on with all, to the point that later disciples, like Paul, referred to him only by his newly acquired name. As time went on, Simon Peter put aside his trade altogether and relinquished the small capital represented by his barks and their various pieces of rigging. As we would expect in someone fond of his daily toil, he could not do this without great sacrifice; but, following Jesus, he was already witnessing events so extraordinary as to forget all other things and even feel well-compensated for any sacrifice he had made. On Mount Tabor, Simon Peter was present at the transfiguration of Jesus; he witnessed the resurrection of the daughter of Jairus; he heard the apocalyptic talks and the prophesies of the Master's passion at which he was so deeply disturbed that he drew a severe reproach from Jesus: "Go behind me, Satan: thou art a scandal unto me, because thou savourest not the things that are of God, but the things that are of men." This event, however, was but incidental, for Jesus continued to shape the character of His faithful and devoted follower, disclosing to him the deepest secrets of His heart and entrusting him with particular tasks. Thus one day, during a conversation at Caesarea Philippi in which Peter said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" and explicitly acknowledged Jesus' Messianic role, the Master solemnly invested him with powers that were to make him the foundation of the new society Christ was planning to establish for the preaching and the teaching of His doctrine: "Blessed art thou, Simon, son of Jona, for flesh and blood have not revealed this to thee, but my Father in heaven.

And I say to thee that thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Matthew 16:17-19).

Expert exegetes and shrewd critics have examined these few lines in all their senses, but no hypothesis, however learned, will obscure the crystal-clear sense of naturalness and the profound sincerity obtained from the first reading of the text. Later a deep and accurate study of the passage will confirm this interpretation and attest to its authenticity, at the same time shedding considerable light on its meaning. First of all, the once popular notion that this text was a later interpolation can be quite properly dismissed. Evidence from the phraseology and the imagery used makes the Aramaic character of the entire context clearly unmistakable. Then, too, verses 17-19 of St. Matthew's sixteenth chapter are in perfect harmony with the preceding verses, and their elimination would render the passage defective. They have always been found in all biblical manuscripts. Moreover, the scholarly Alexandrian exegete, Origen, who lived in the first half of the third century, wrote a commentary on each word of them after he had made long journeys in order to obtain the best rendition of the biblical text. Nor would one find a publisher of the New Testament today who would dare eliminate these verses from his critical edition or mark them as doubtful and subject to variation, notwithstanding the many families of codices which differ as to both their characters and their traditions.

Once we have admitted the substantial authenticity of the text, it is somewhat easier to face other, more serious, problems of critique, such as the internal study of the words used and the reasons for the presence of the passage in question in only one

of the canonical gospels. The Aramaic word *Kepha*, always masculine both as a proper and as a common noun, gives rise to a perfect play on words in that language such as would not be likely to occur in either Latin or English. To express the idea of "church," Jesus probably used the Aramaic word *qahal*, which suggests a gathering, an assembly, and contains the notion of a grouping. It is true, though, that nowhere else in the New Testament does one find the phrase "my church." True, too, that the gospels speak of "flock," "plant," "banquet feast" and "kingdom" more than of "church" or "assembly." With reference to the "gates," these obviously stand at the threshold of the city. Once, in fact, in small fortified towns all were safe as long as the gates remained standing; and here, too, they are considered capable of sustaining attack, for the kingdom of Satan is forever waging its malicious war against God. Finally, the phrase "keys of the kingdom" is a frequent metaphor in biblical literature and signifies the authority that belongs to the master of the house. To give these keys to someone is equivalent to giving him authority over the whole house. It is this same notion that lies behind the image "to bind and to loose," a phrase which means to forbid and to permit, to defend and to command. The man who has such powers does not merely interpret the law but he also has the power to enact laws, establish precedents, punish or forgive, according to what he judges to be right. All this is quite in keeping with the sense of the entire Gospel of St. Matthew, whose aim it was to bring out the establishment of a religious authority and a magisterium, as opposed to the Jewish synagogue. Accordingly, to quote a very good authority, "the anti-pharisaic tendency of the Gospel of St. Matthew culminates . . . in the establishment of a new Church and in the new authority granted to St. Peter. Our Lord's promise to St. Peter is undiluted anti-pharisaism" (Adam, *The Spirit of Catholicism*, p. 105).

From this we may properly conclude that the presence of the passage about Peter only in the Gospel of St. Matthew constitutes no reason for wonderment, since it is perfectly in keeping with the aim of the gospel itself. Its absence in the other Synoptics can be easily understood when one considers that each gospel had a different objective in view, which would have made its presence in them even more difficult to explain. Furthermore, it is not hard to think that Peter, and so also Mark, would have wanted to omit in his teaching an episode which tended to glorify him personally. As to Luke's omission, it was perhaps due to the fact that he did not wish to create any difficulty among the Greek community. At any rate, if specific phrases are lacking in the other Synoptics, there are others nearly akin to them, such as the "strengthen the brethren" of Luke (22:32) and the famous conversation between Jesus and Peter related by John which took place after the resurrection (note that Jesus addressed His words only to Peter, though all the other apostles were present)—a passage which stands as the second pillar in the gospel foundation of papal primacy: "When, therefore, they had breakfasted, Jesus said to Simon Peter, 'Simon, son of John, dost thou love me more than these do?' He said to him, 'Yes, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee.' He said to him, 'Feed my lambs.' He said to him a second time, 'Simon, son of John, dost thou love me?' He said to him, 'Yes, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee.' He said to him, 'Feed my lambs.' A third time he said to him, 'Simon, son of John, dost thou love me?' Peter was grieved because he said to him for the third time, 'Dost thou love me?' And he said to him, 'Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee.' He said to him, 'Feed my sheep' " (John 21:15-17).

One final point remains to be cleared up, a point that is of considerable importance for the history of the papacy: Was the conferring of the power, which Peter undoubtedly received,

limited to his person or was it to be passed on, with Peter serving merely as the first link of a long chain? The answer is implied in what has already been said about Jesus' design regarding the transmission of His legacy. If with Him a new era was to have its beginning, if all who were seeking salvation were to have recourse to Him, and if from Him were to be drawn, as from a life-giving fountain, the graces necessary for participating in the new religious society, it is clear that there had to be some institution entrusted with the administration of that spiritual legacy. A continuity in the succession had to be established for the preservation and the interpretation of the deposit of the faith. To sum up, a series of assuredly authentic and very significant passages in the gospels does not merely indicate a personal prerogative belonging to one of the apostles, Peter, or just an initiative of his own in the work of the apostolate; but it outlines a position and drafts the function of a chief who would be permanent to the organization, possessing both light to transmit and powers to exercise in the kingdom of God on earth and in the Mystical Body of Christ.

3. Peter's Activity According to the Acts of the Apostles

After the turbulent events of Easter and the succeeding forty days, one finds the remaining disciples of Jesus gathered in Jerusalem. Strengthened by the infusion of the Holy Spirit, these men, who up to now had given no evidence of a clear understanding of what their tasks were to be, immediately take up the work of the apostolate under Peter's direction.

As a historical narrative, the Acts of the Apostles permits us to follow the activities of Peter closely, at least until the year 50 A.D. Rationalistic exegetes, however, raised serious doubts concerning the validity of this source; but a sound historical

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criticism has almost completely disposed of their difficulties, and the reliability of the information contained in the Acts is now unassailable. The principal events of the life of Peter as recorded in the Acts are as follows: his initiative in completing the college of the Twelve (prior to the descent of the Holy Spirit); the great discourse preached after the Pentecost, and others made on a variety of occasions, before audiences different in race and education; his own defense before the Sanhedrin; his condemnation of Ananias and Sapphira, two of the faithful who had tried to deceive the apostles concerning the returns from the sale of their property; his imprisonment and his miraculous escape; his choice of deacons; the missions with John in Samaria and his harsh words to Simon, who had tried to buy with money the charismatic gifts of the apostles; his first contacts with the new convert, Paul; more missions at Lydda and Joppa, with miracles and conversions; his receiving into the community the centurion, Cornelius, and the spirited polemics which this occasioned as to whether the time had come to extend the teaching of God's word even to the Gentiles; another imprisonment at the hands of King Herod Agrippa and another miraculous escape.

After stating that Peter "departed and went elsewhere," the Acts of the Apostles begins to follow Paul in his travels and mentions Peter only once more on the occasion of the Council of Jerusalem. About this we shall speak later. As to Peter's subsequent life, it is possible to fix only a few points, on the basis of information obtained from indirect references and from sources other than the Acts. Now, in order to underscore the importance of certain attitudes assumed by Peter in these first years—attitudes which profoundly influenced the ultimate orientation of the life of "the Church"—it is necessary to review something already related above. First of all, it is clear that Peter intended to establish a center for the spiritual movement

initiated by Jesus; and it was with a good deal of courage that he chose for this Jerusalem itself, the capital city of his adversaries. He also intended to give it a definite organization, holding fast to the number of the apostles at twelve. He made it clear that those entrusted with the "ministry of the word" were different from those (the deacons) whose duty it was to provide for the material cares of the community. At the same time, he ordered the members of the community to fulfill other duties and threatened severe punishments if they should fail to do so. Moreover, he set up an original type of preaching, which was a summary, as it were, of the doctrine of the apostles (Acts 2:42), insisting in his sermons on some special points, bringing out certain facts concerning Christ's person and work, and laying before the faithful the way they must follow. Finally, Peter exercised a decisive influence in the propagation of Christianity, making converts, confirming his words with miracles, and passing judgment as to who was to be admitted into the Christian community. Incidentally, we should like to note in this regard that some scholars have built up what might be well described as a historical novel based on a hypothetical conflict of tendencies within the first community between the Jews (Peter among them) and the Hellenists. The situation is much simpler even if not less interesting. In the preaching of Jesus there was already present a note of universality. However, there were among His disciples those who wanted an initiation in Judaism as an indispensable preliminary to becoming Christians. This attitude was the effect of the old suspicion against the Gentiles which was still alive among the members of the "chosen people." After he had seen by unmistakable, divine signs that all could be called to penance and the new life (Acts 2:18), Peter accepted the conversion of the Gentiles without hesitation. Later, however, he did consider it opportune to follow the not unusual practice of circumcision before baptism;

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finally, after an exchange of ideas with Paul which was not without its dramatic moments, he returned to his first policy (that is, baptism with no prerequisite of circumcision) and had it officially approved in solemn assembly. It was a natural dilemma in view of the delicate decision to be made. Nor does Peter's changing back and forth make him less appealing. On the contrary, it brings us closer to him, since he is shown, as it were, in all his human character. Nor were his prerogatives weakened by this, for never did he fall into error or teach a false doctrine. Also, as marked a contrast as existed between Peter and Paul, there never was between them any fundamental difference in doctrine but only in the approach or in the practice to be followed. Neither could one accuse Paul of doing wrong in correcting his confrere by a contradiction of a practical nature, nor could one infer that by so doing Paul intended to contest the legitimacy of Peter's primary position. Quite the contrary, for even this incident confirms Peter's importance, his influence in the life of the community, the effects of his every act and the value of his decisions. But this unusual authority, which all recognized as Peter's, had to be based on some very fundamental principle. The prestige that he enjoyed was the effect of a special prerogative which could be founded only on a choice made by Jesus, on a mandate given to him by the Master, of which the disciples were all well aware.

Since we have several times made incidental references to Paul, it is well to note the particular care he took to keep in contact with *Kephas*. (This is the Aramaic carried over into Greek; it appears in the Pauline epistles written before Matthew's Gospel. These texts constitute a further proof of the authenticity of the passages of St. Matthew's examined above.) In a kind of self-defense prefacing his epistle to the Galatians, the Apostle to the Gentiles actually states that, following his conversion and his preparatory retreat, "Then after three years

I went to Jerusalem to see Peter, and I remained with him fifteen days. But I saw none of the other apostles, except James, the brother of the Lord." (Galatians 1:18).

Where did Peter go when reasons of prudence forced him to depart from Jerusalem? In recent years, the theory has been revived with renewed vigor that he made straight for Rome; and on the basis of scanty information furnished by Jerome and Eusebius, a lengthy discussion has ensued about a first Roman sojourn of the Apostle. We should like to be permitted to leave this as a very dubious matter, limiting our analysis to more certain data concerning Peter's activities. Thus, for example, his long stay at Antioch in Syria is beyond any doubt, and it is more than probable that he made his way into the regions of Pontus, Galatia and Cappadocia. Otherwise, it would be hard to explain why he addressed a letter to the faithful of those lands as to "the sojourners of the Dispersion." The very tone of this letter makes one think that its author is already known to the recipients. Perhaps Peter was also at Corinth, in view of the fact that, as Paul testifies, there existed in this city a following of Peter—although it could also be that some immigrants, on their arrival, were surprised at the great authority enjoyed by Paul at Corinth and appealed instead to the authority of Peter.

Some time around 50 A.D. Peter was again in Palestine and presided at what has been called the Council of Jerusalem, convened to settle the question of the necessity of observing the Mosaic Laws. His address on the occasion is to the point and not too gentle toward the rigid conservatives: "And he [God] made no distinction between us and them [the Gentiles], but cleansed their hearts by faith [i.e., not by Jewish rites]. Why then do you now try to test God by putting on the neck of the disciples a yoke which neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear?" The results were as decisive as they were im-

mediate: "Then the whole meeting quieted down," and even James, though with some minor reservation, assented to the agreed policy "of not imposing more burdens than necessary," precisely as Peter had suggested. Here we are dealing with an important meeting that witnessed the coming together of all the authorities belonging to the new Christian society. The interpretation of the entire message of Jesus was at stake, and there could be no hesitation as to the right course to take. Even here Peter acted with bold candidness, like one authorized to solve the most delicate questions arising in the life of the community, although with the exercise of powers kept in a joint form so as to take into due account the privileges which rightfully belonged to the other apostles. All this demonstrates the existence of a dual order of jurisdiction—a primatial jurisdiction, which the Master had conferred on Peter alone; and a pastoral jurisdiction, which belonged to the whole apostolic college. Heiler, a Protestant, was right when he stated that in all this there is already the beginning of Catholicism, in the sense that one finds present in it, as in an embryonic stage, all the characteristic elements of the complete Catholic structure which will come into broad daylight after the Church will have reached its full development in the course of the centuries.

4. Peter in Rome—His Martyrdom

Finally, Peter came to Rome. The arrival of the Prince of the Apostles in the Eternal City, together with the authenticity of the text "Tu es Petrus . . .," is the great pivotal point in the history of primitive papacy. The books that this subject has occasioned are so many that an entire library could be filled with them. One also notes that the more critical period concerning this subject is passed and that a relative agreement

has been established on the acceptance of the truth of the traditional belief. Among others, reliable Protestant historian Lietzmann, in his renowned book *Petrus und Paulus in Rom*, was forced to admit Peter's stay in Rome, faced as he was with the compelling proofs brought forward in its favor. By this admission he took out of the hands of his coreligionists one of their favorite weapons; and by showing the weakness of their position, he also refuted the proponents of trite argumentations. Greater strength still has recently been added to that opinion, thanks to the painstaking archeological work of research carried out in the area of the Vatican. Some of the findings of this research are taken into account in the present book.*

* In 1939, when a tomb for Pius XI was being prepared by order of Pope Pius XII, the floor of the crypt of St. Peter's Basilica was dug deeper to make more headroom. The discovery of Roman tombs suggested extending the excavations to the area held by tradition to be that of St. Peter's tomb. The conclusions arrived at after ten years' work were collected in a monumental two-volume publication, *Esplorazioni sotto la Confessione di S. Pietro*, Vatican Press, 1951. They are as follows:

1. Discovery of a large number of Christian and pagan graves of the second and the third centuries.
2. The zone upon which Constantine's basilica was erected was a "cemeterial area."
3. Constantine's basilica was erected near the Circus of Nero, where, according to documentary proof, St. Peter was martyred.
4. Constantine's basilica was erected upon the tomb of St. Peter.
5. The actual burial place of the Apostle is proved by an uninterrupted monumental tradition going from the third century down to our present day.

In a very recent work, the best publication on the Vatican excavations, *The Shrine of St. Peter and the Vatican Excavations* (Longmans, Green and Co., 1956), John B. Ward Perkins and J. Toynbee have accepted the above mentioned results, although, as archeologists, they confine themselves strictly to the examination of the objective findings, leaving to other authorities the final implications and ultimate conclusions to be derived from the amazing discoveries.

In a recent lecture given at the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D. C., reported by N.C.W.C. News Service (March 7, 1957) Mr. Perkins, famed archeologist and director of the British School in Rome, stated that the Vatican excavations have established that a site under the altar of St. Peter's Basilica has been regarded as the burial place of St. Peter the Apostle since the middle of the second century. He also stated that recent excavations have failed to give conclusive proof of the tradition that the high altar in the basilica marks St. Peter's grave. "It was, on the other hand, firmly established that the purpose of Constantine's great church [the basilica of Constantine in Rome begun in 323]

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The Christian community in Rome arose, not through the influence of any of the apostles, but rather as the result of reports by the Jews who were present in Jerusalem at the time Peter delivered his discourse in that city (Acts 2:10), or even as the result of reports by the soldiers belonging to the Italian cohort stationed at Caesarea who had witnessed the conversion of their centurion into the hands of Peter. The new doctrines preached by the followers of Christ gave rise to disputes within the Jewish colony in Rome. To avoid all cause of trouble, in the year 49, Emperor Claudius issued an edict by which all Jews living in the city were expelled. Some few years later these Jews along with their dissident brethren returned to the city, and in the year 58 Paul could address to "to all God's beloved who are in Rome, called to be saints"—that solemn document which is the Epistle to the Romans, judged by some scholars as the book in which revelation reached its highest form. Three years later this same Apostle reached Rome—but in chains. He lived there for some time, carrying out an extensive program of preaching, in relative tranquillity. In all this no indication is given of Peter's presence in Rome, and—in our opinion—Peter had not yet had direct contact with the Christian

had been to preserve and to honor the remains of an earlier monument, a small shrine standing in a courtyard. This shrine, which lies immediately beneath the high altar, was built about A.D. 160 and is assuredly the work of the early Christian community. All the evidence is consistent with (and is indeed best explained by) the supposition that it marked the site of a grave, which had been disturbed by the builders of the adjoining second-century tombs and which was identified by the Christian community as that of the Apostle [Peter]. Whether the identification was right or wrong is not a matter upon which the archaeologist can pass judgment. What the archaeologist can do is to point out that close beside this hypothetical early grave were found the remains of several others, which are certainly as early as the first half of the second century, and which may be as much as 50 years earlier. In other words, the excavations have not proved the truth of the tradition of St. Peter's burial spot, but they have shown that, in archaeological terms, the tradition is fully in accord with the observed facts; and they have established beyond reasonable doubt, that from the middle of the second century, this spot was venerated by the Christian Community as the burial place of the Apostle."—Translator's note.

community of that city. But not long afterwards he did arrive in Rome and took up his residence there, assuming at the same time the direction of the local Church. We find him in Rome when Nero was persecuting the Christians to ward off the people's hatred toward himself for setting fire to some parts of the city. In the letter which Peter wrote to the Christian community in Asia Minor, one seems to hear the echo of the persecution he was witnessing and of the fierce hatred that was being unleashed against the innocent Christians. He also used the word "fire," which indicates clearly the profoundly stirring feelings that Peter was experiencing. The letter is dated from "Babylon," and it was this very fact that led many to deny that it came from Peter and from Rome. But the objection is of no weight, since this is by no means the only case in which the capital of the world empire was considered in biblical language as the city steeped in the dregs of all vices and locked under Satan's sway. Thus, it was called by a name which in mystical language marks all the enemies of good and of the citizenry of the heavenly Jerusalem. The atmosphere in which the letter was written indeed justifies the use of that term. On the other hand, no evidence has been advanced leading to the belief that Christianity in apostolic times had spread among the Parthians—that is, to the area where once stood the historical city of Babylon.

The following make either direct or indirect reference to Peter's stay in Rome: Pope Clement's letter written at the end of the first century after Christ; a letter written at the beginning of the second century by Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, while on his way to Rome to suffer martyrdom; Irenaeus of Lyons in the list of bishops contained in his *Adversus Haereses* (*Against Heresies*); Tertullian; the so-called "Muratorian Fragment"; Bishop Dionysius of Corinth and his priest, Caius, as reported by Eusebius of Caesarea in his *Historia Ecclesiastica* (*Church*

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History); the Alexandrian writers, Clement and Origen. If, however, Justin and others are silent on this matter, one need not wonder; for they were addressing themselves to representatives of the civil powers, and it would not have been tactful to rake up a crime committed by their predecessors in the condemnation of Peter. On the other hand, Justin fails also to speak of Paul in Rome, and it is impossible to raise any doubt about Paul's presence there.

Of no small merit, however, are the arguments from silence deduced from the fact that during the second and the third centuries not one of the various Churches claimed the honor of harboring within its walls either the spot where Peter died or his tomb, nor did any of them think to strike at Rome's heart (as Monceaux expressed it so effectively) by destroying her "claim" to have been the Apostle's see. Keen rivalries were not lacking among the Christian communities, as we shall see later. Accordingly, it would have been entirely in their own interest to tear down Rome's claims. But even those who actually reduced the pre-eminence of the Roman see to the minimum never denied Peter's coming to Rome or his rulership there, although this argument would have been a simple and decisive one in ending any further discussion on the matter. Moreover, though Paul had many important relations with the Roman community, no one ever spoke of the Roman episcopacy as belonging to him. The Apostle of the Gentiles was always regarded as a traveler, whereas Peter had been and tradition has recognized in him the bishop of definite sees, the last of which was Rome.

In a year somewhere between 65 and 68 and on a day quite unknown, Peter suffered martyrdom. Origen and St. Jerome add that he was crucified upside down. The case is not impossible, for it was customary to inflict such punishment on criminals of the lowest social rank so as to increase their suffering. The

execution was carried out in the area of the Vatican fields in the Circus of Nero, and through the kindness of some devoted bystanders the venerated body received immediate burial on the spot. The reason for the execution is unknown. The details in the *Acta Apocrypha* cannot be taken literally, since they are a fantastic intermingling of local traditions and pious beliefs. Nor are we able to ascertain whether the Apostle Paul was martyred at the same time, as commonly reported. The most elemental consideration, however, makes us doubt it, since no reasons exist in favor of such a theory and, among other things, the political status of these two men was entirely different. Paul, in fact, was a Roman citizen and, as such, he was beheaded on the Via Ostiensis.

On the contrary, Peter's grave, which must have consisted of a small room, was located in a field, probably the property of Christians, near the edge of a public road which crossed a burial ground. Ancient as well as recent archeological discoveries testify to an abundance and variety of funereal memorials belonging to that section. But what matters most is the constant and universal belief of the Christian world that the grave was just where it is venerated even to this day. The successors of Peter, furthermore, were interred there, including Pope Victor (†198 A.D.). Then, perhaps due to limitation of space, the official burial of the bishops of Rome was transferred to a crypt in the Cemetery of Callistus. On the area of Peter's grave, Pope Anicetus built a memorial or oratory. Later, a regular Christian cemetery was established on that territory and monuments were built from which various inscriptions are in existence today. In the meantime the Apostle's remains were temporarily removed. Though the fact is certain, neither the date of it nor the reasons for it are known. This, of course, leaves the door open to the most diverse hypotheses among scholars and to endless discussion about the circumstances sur-

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rounding the event. The most probable theory is that in 258, at the time of the Valerian persecution, in view of the danger impending upon the graves of the Apostles, their bodies were translated from their respective tombs to an underground place on the Appian Way, at the third mile, in a locality called *ad Catacumbas* ("at the Catacombs"—St. Sebastian's). This happened on June 29, "while Bassus and Tuscus were consuls"; and, after, the faithful went to pray there to invoke the protection of the two great saints.

To give greater efficacy to their prayers, with a naïve but sincere intent, many wrote their names on the walls of the monument with brief but warm phrases, such as, "*Petre et Paule in mentem habete . . .*" Graffiti of this kind were found in great numbers together with traces of the rite of *refrigerium* which was performed also at those tombs. When the danger had passed, the bodies were returned to their original places. With the advent of the era of the triumph and the recognition of the Church by Constantine, the modest signs of identification were replaced by sumptuous basilicas. The emperor himself had a cross of pure gold and an inscription placed on Peter's sepulchre. It has become a commonplace observation that no architect would ever have dreamed of building an edifice like the Basilica of St. Peter in Vatican on such a bad location—one without stable foundations and already occupied by other monuments—except that it was done for a definite reason and as the fulfillment of an unchangeable commitment. In other words, from the architectural point of view the basilica is an absurdity; but it was built at the cost of great sacrifices and efforts precisely on that spot because it was to cover the burial place of Peter, as a protection against possible temerarious assaults. Of the successive events concerning the tomb of Peter and the basilica, we shall speak later.

In various other localities in Rome, memorials are kept of the sojourn of Peter. This is particularly true of one cemeterial area on the Salarian Way, called Ostrianum from the Ostorians who actually lived in Rome in the first century. It seems that Peter had been accustomed to baptize in such a place. There is also a constant iconographic tradition in Rome, supported by very ancient documents, representing the Apostle in some of his more fundamental traits. But this is only a particular facet. Instead, to conclude this information on the tasks and activities of Peter as head of the primitive Church, it is proper to examine briefly the personality of this man who, called by a most exceptional grace to a position unique in the whole world at a crucial moment of its history, applied himself enthusiastically to the task and performed a mission that was decisive for Christianity.

5. The Personality of Peter

Peter was not a scholar; for, unlike Paul, he had received no formal training. Even the spokesmen of the Sanhedrin, perhaps exaggerating in order to place him in bad light, defined him as "uneducated and ordinary" (Acts 4:13). However, in his fellowship with Jesus he had acquired some serious convictions which he later brought out in his writings and sermons. Yet, emotions were predominant in him even more than ideas. Above all, he revealed himself to be a man of action, endowed with great organizational ability, for it must have been anything but easy to sustain and develop an incipient movement under such extremely difficult circumstances.

In his epistles, exhortations and admonitions prevail; these he directed both to the faithful, so that they might live worthily and bear persecution courageously, and to the priests who were the leaders of the Churches. To these latter Peter speaks like a "fellow-presbyter and a witness of the sufferings of Christ."

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This is precisely the kind of refrain that recurs again and again in his writings. Once he understood the real meaning of the Messianic mission of Jesus, he was determined to give public testimony of the life, miracles and resurrection of the Master. His warm character, his generous and impulsive temperament led him to dedicate himself with absolute devotion and ardent zeal to this office, and to sacrifice even his own life for this ideal. A deliberate stability that stupefied friends and enemies replaced the timidity, the uncertainties and the inconstancy which characterized the first period of Simon's fellowship with Jesus. Peter accepted the responsibilities connected with his position of leadership; he took command of situations with promptness and decisiveness, delivered sermons with great sureness and dignity—as when he spoke of the impossibility of remaining silent, since he was to obey God rather than men; and when he accused his own Jewish nationals of having condemned Jesus unjustly. Add his humility and the prudence which he exercised during his long years of government, in contrast to his earlier presumption and rashness, and you will have a complete portrait of the man who “replaced” Christ.

This is, in fact, the term that more appropriately indicates the function of Peter in the infant Church, a function for which ordinarily the term “vicar” is used. Peter had received his authority by delegation and, insofar as men were concerned, he represented Christ. He advanced no claim to any power as his own. Since from its very beginnings the Church founded by Jesus Christ was a visible and an organized society, it was necessary that there should be a living authority to govern it, to guide and correct its members according to the original spirit. Such was the mission of the apostles; but the apostles cannot be conceived of without Peter, who was the foundation of the Christian community. For those who believe, the episodes of

Peter's life, from his investiture by Christ to his arrival at and death in Rome, are all part of a providential plan, and the realization of divine promises. Nonbelievers will at least have to admit that "the great man to whom were left the Keys" (Dante, *Divine Comedy*, Paradise, xxiv, 34) was a notable personality.

1. The First Manifestations of the Supremacy of the Roman See

Following the death of Peter, for about ten years the Roman Church lapsed into a state of seeming obscurity. Since our purpose is not to offer a chronological or a biographical presentation of the bishops of Rome, but to trace the historical development of the papal institution, we shall skip that short period altogether and proceed to analyze the first important document regarding the pre-eminent position enjoyed by the Roman community and its head in the body of primitive Christianity—namely, the Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians.

2. The Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians

Already at the time of St. Paul the Church of Corinth was torn by grave internal dissensions which the Apostle did not hesitate to censure very severely in his epistles. Toward the end of the first century, such dissensions continued or new ones arose and went as far as causing the expulsion of the presbyters from the community. The reasons for such clashes escape us

(for instance, differences between charismatics and hierarchy; racial intolerance between Greeks and Latins), nor is it our aim to discuss them here. What interests us instead is the Roman intervention in the dispute. Was this intervention solicited by the Corinthians themselves or was it the result of an initiative taken by the faithful of Rome? The question is rather idle, for, whether it was sought or simply accepted, the fact remains that the voice of Rome was heard by the Churches that were also outstanding for their apostolic foundation or important for their geographical position, as in the case of the Church of Corinth. "The Church of God which resides as a stranger at Rome to the Church of God which is a stranger at Corinth; to those who are called and sanctified by the will of God through our Lord Jesus Christ. May grace and peace from Almighty God flow to you in rich profusion through Jesus Christ" (ACW trans.).

The letter continues with various historical references and with a definite mention of the martyrdom which Saints Peter and Paul had suffered in Rome. As reason for his delayed intervention directed at composing an "execrable and godless schism so utterly foreign to the elect of God," inflamed by "only a few rash and headstrong individuals," the writer adduces the "suddenly bursting and rapidly succeeding calamities and untoward experiences"—namely, the persecution of Domitian, which lasted until the year 96.

Author of the Epistle to the Corinthians is the bishop Clement, who in the series of pontiffs follows Linus and Cletus (Anacletus). One scholar has reduced the function of Clement to that of a simple writer or of a secretary to the community, charged with the task of writing down its opinions and its decisions. On the contrary, the entire ancient tradition acknowledged his eminent position, seeing in him a notable personality, conscious of the responsibilities of his office and eager to re-

main true to the traditions transmitted to him by the founders of the Roman Church.

In fact, from various passages of the letter it appears that Clement conceived the Christian communities as groups of faithful guided by their own pastors, who had the dual office of ruling and of distributing charitable assistance. Such religious societies have their own rule (*kanon*) to which all must adhere, while their leaders must perform their own office (*leiturgia*) and transmit it to others. The leaders are indicated by the names "bishop" and "presbyter" without distinction. Outside of the Christian society no salvation is possible.

The *I^a Clementis* (this is the name by which this important document, the First Epistle of Clement, has come down through history) is not the first manifestation of ecclesiastical law, as Sohm claimed. That is, it is in no way an indication that a bureaucratic system had replaced the spirituality of primitive Christianity. It is not even, strictly speaking, a proof of a Roman primacy, because there is no trace of this in any part of the text. Its value consists in the very fact that it was written; in that it shows that at a time when there existed many communities of a positive apostolic origin, only the Roman community thought it proper, either at the request of those involved in the case or on its own initiative, to interest itself in the internal life of a church. There was in such an act a "Catholic" sense of Christian life which contained, at least embryonically, the affirmation of a duty of surveillance and of magisterium: "You certainly will give us the keenest pleasure if you prove obedient to what we have written through the Holy Spirit, and extirpate the lawless passion of your jealousy in accordance with the pleas we have made in this letter for peace and concord" (63:2).

Since such consciousness could not be the fruit of arrogance, as the historical development of the early Church well testifies, it follows that it had to proceed from a source. It had to be the

effect of a charge given to the Roman community and to its head, according to a divine plan. In virtue of this, Rome acted with prudence and yet with energy, emphasizing, as she would always do, the importance of discipline and insisting on the necessity of due respect for the hierarchy as a condition for the proper maintenance of order.

The church of Corinth received with great respect the letter of Clement and placed it among the sacred texts read at Sunday services. The *Roma locuta est* which Augustine will formulate three hundred and twenty years later seems to be already present in this attitude. The Roman community knew not only the power of command but the practice of Christian charity as well, for it was also by Rome's charitable activities that the bonds of the ecclesiastical communion were held together. A piece of testimony bearing on this aspect of the activities of Rome in ancient Christianity will now be considered.

3. *From Ignatius of Antioch to Abercius*

If at the end of the first century of the Christian era we find signs of a Roman intervention in the affairs of other churches, in the first decades of the second century we find proofs of devoted appeals made to Rome by most illustrious members of distant Christian communities. Thus, Ignatius of Antioch, after addressing various letters to the faithful in all parts of the world, while going to his martyrdom, also sent one to those in Rome; but he was careful to state immediately that he had no orders to give this community and wished only to ask its prayers: "Ignatius, also called Theophorus, to the church that has found mercy in the transcendent Majesty of the Most High Father and of Jesus Christ, His only Son; the church by the will of Him who willed all things that exist, beloved and illuminated through the faith and love of Jesus Christ our God; which

also presides in the chief place of the Roman territory; a church worthy of God, worthy of honor, worthy of felicitation, worthy of praise, worthy of success, worthy of sanctification, and presiding in love, maintaining the law of Christ, and bearer of the Father's name: her do I therefore salute in the name of Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father. Heartiest good wishes for unimpaired joy in Jesus Christ our God, to those who are united in flesh and spirit for every commandment of His; who imperturbably enjoy the full measure of God's grace and have every foreign stain filtered out of them" (ACW trans.).

These statements indicate that Ignatius recognized a special position for Rome and, as Harnack said, attributed to the Roman community a priority in the group of her sister communities, knowing as he did her energy and her constant work in transmitting to the others her strength and her teachings.

We shall not discuss the various expressions used by Ignatius in the passage reported above. Particular concern is caused by the incidental expression *prokathemene tes agapes*, which could be translated also as "who heads the community" if we take "*agape*" to mean not so much the material charity as the bond of love uniting the members of the Church. At any rate, it is certain that in the course of the letter Ignatius insists on the primacy of Rome and founds such a prerogative on apostolic tradition. In the fourth chapter, Ignatius mentions Peter and Paul's stay in Rome and speaks of it as a thing known to all and accepted without difficulty. According to his ecclesiological conception, Ignatius gives great importance to the bishop as the only head of each church and fulcrum of its life. Thus, the various constitutive elements of the community are gradually shaping into an organic form before our eyes, allowing us to picture concretely its structure and its activities. The other testimonies of the second century agree with Ignatius in that

they too show the fervor and the complexity of activities in the life of the Christian community of Rome.

In the middle of the second century one finds another example of the respect enjoyed by the Roman See and of the influence exerted by the same See over the whole of Christianity. The venerable and outstanding bishop of Smyrna, Polycarp, decided to journey to Rome to settle a vexing question relative to the date of the celebration of Easter. This had been fixed by some on the fourteenth day of the month of Nisan (the day of the death of Jesus), and by others it had been transferred to the Sunday following the full moon of the same month (as it is even today). Bishop Anicetus, who then governed the community, was unwilling to depart from local customs, or, as St. Irenaeus stated some decades later, "could not change the tradition of the presbyters who had preceded him." Strengthened by the tradition coming down from St. John, Polycarp refused to give in. However, the two bishops kept peaceful relations between them and, as a sign of friendship, Anicetus asked Polycarp to offer the Eucharistic service in his stead.

With Anicetus the personality of the bishop begins to gain in importance, although Harnack exaggerates in considering his government as the beginning of a local monarchical episcopate. His activities were principally directed to the preservation of oneness in a community threatened by heresies and divisions. Even if he did not fully succeed in his efforts, the clearness of his intent and the zeal shown in pursuing it remain an undisputed fact.

A soul-stirring homage was directed to Rome by Abercius, a Christian, perhaps a priest of Hieropolis in Phrygia. It is unthinkable that the praises he lavished upon "the kingdom and the queen with a golden stole and golden footwear" and upon the people "carrying a resplendent seal" could have been directed to pagan Rome, persecutor of Christians. It is, instead,

a description of the Church as being impressive not so much for its exterior richness as for the importance of its functions and the nobility of its origin.

The phrases related above are part of an epitaph preserved in the Lateran Museum and considered the most valuable of all Christian inscriptions for the amount of information it contains. Abercius lived in the second half of the second century, travelled extensively and came to Rome in person.

4. Irenaeus of Lyons and Victor

All the testimonies mentioned up to this point concerning the importance and the function of the Church of Rome are eclipsed by that of Irenaeus, who was bishop of Lyons though an easterner by origin. His word is authoritative and explicit, always based on facts and precise in its references. In fact, Irenaeus was only one generation removed from the apostles and had known many immediate disciples of the apostles. For this reason, his entire doctrine flows from a fresh tradition and from the teachings of authoritative and competent persons. Besides, his journeys from one end to the other of the Mediterranean area placed him in a position to know everything with regard to the conditions of the various Christian churches. In the face of the grave peril arising from surging heresies, Irenaeus not only moved into polemics with the errants but turned to the surest remedy by urging them to return to the genuine apostolic traditions. For this reason he represents a certain guarantee (Protestant and rationalist scholars agree on this) of the conservative spirit of the early Church, and is himself a witness of the unity and immutability of Christian faith in the second century.

Though it is quite certain that the text of Irenaeus did not come down to us in its original form, the concept appears very

clear in it that the Church of Rome is possessed of an authority exceeding that of any other church in those matters which regard the faith. Such an authority is derived, not from the fact that she is the most ancient church (for she was not) nor from her claim to an apostolic foundation (even others could claim that), but from something that she alone possesses or that she has in a degree which exceeds that of the other churches. Consequently, it is a moral obligation to agree with her in questions of faith in order to remain in the truth, rather than act like the heretics, who out of vainglory or blindness "gather where they must not," that is, introduce novelties contrary to tradition. The Church of Rome, which is well known to all, will confound the errants with the purity of her teachings, which are according to the Sacred Scriptures, and will preserve the authenticity of the apostolic doctrine.

Until now we have spoken of a Church, but Irenaeus has very clearly before his mind a person, not an organization, in that he knows that it is only in the succession of the bishops that the continuity of tradition is maintained. The acknowledgment of the doctrinal authority of the bishop of Rome constitutes, indeed, the central part of Irenaeus' thought and permits us to speak of a belief in infallibility in matters of faith as a fact as early as the second century and universally accepted, to a point that it represented the surest weapon in confounding heretics and the surest way of establishing religious truth among Christians.

Two applications of such a principle are found in those days, which reveal more and more the importance of the Roman community in the historical evolution of the gospel message. One is the determining of the official canon of the books of the New Testament; the other, the formulating of the first Symbols or professions of faith.

It was Harnack himself who observed not only that the

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distinction between canonical and noncanonical books of the Bible appears for the first time in the Church of Rome, but also that the manuscripts of the oriental churches show lessons contained in the text used in Rome. This is easily explained by the supposition that every community received an authentic copy from Rome according to which corrections were made in their own lectionaries. On the other hand, it is a well-known fact, according to the same author, that the various churches communicated among themselves, not directly, but through the Roman Church. Also, everywhere the date affixed to "Acts" was computed, not according to the years of government of the local bishop, but according to those of the bishop of Rome. In the elaboration of the Symbol, which after successive additions took its present form at the time of the Council of Nicaea, the part played by the Roman Church was once again decisive not only by the vigilance it exercised against the introduction of new additions, but also by its care in circularizing the forms already fixed. And because acceptance or rejection of the Symbol was an absolute condition for membership in the Church, and its interpretation was an important and delicate element in the handling of the life of the community, everyone will see what a notable influence this action exerted in the development of the prestige and the powers of the Roman Church.

The accession of Victor, the *Episcopus Afer* ("African bishop") elected in 189, marked a new orientation in the history of the pontificate and a considerable step forward in the recognition of the Roman primacy. First of all, a change is noticeable in the language of the official documents, which indicates a change in the predominant influences upon the community. Secondly, the organizational character is emphasized, discipline is tightened, and rigidity increased.

Two principal questions arose in the ten years of the epis-

copy of Victor, one disciplinary, the other doctrinal. In both cases the position taken by Victor was clear and his line of conduct inflexible. In order to settle once and for all the question regarding the date of the celebration of Easter, Victor convened various provincial and regional councils; and the only one which had expressed a view different from that of Rome (the one of Asia Minor, heir of the tradition of John and Polycarp), he ordered to conform without delay, threatening the most severe sanctions against all recalcitrants. The above-mentioned Irenaeus of Lyons interposed his good offices and, in time, the controversy was settled, but the act of authority displayed by the bishop of Rome remains a meaningful one. The same thing happened with regard to the doctrinal error of one Theodotus, who was going around preaching that Christ was not God but only a man whom God had adopted. With a lapidary style, Hippolytus, of whom we shall speak at length soon, recalls that "Victor has excommunicated Theodotus, a tanner by trade, leader of that apostasy." The heresy, in fact, was a very serious one, as it placed in doubt the very foundations of all revelation, but the reaction to it was likewise prompt and severe. Far from causing a scandal, the pontiff's action met with universal approval. It is true that someone observed that Victor had acted too severely by threatening to cut off the Asians from the Roman communion and the common union, yet nobody cast any doubt upon his right to exercise such power. As to the punishment of heretics, Tertullian observed (the reference regards Valentinus, not Theodotus, but the concept is applicable to both cases) that whoever *ab ecclesia authenticæ regulæ abruptit*, "broke away from the Church possessing the authentic rule" cannot hope to be Christ's disciple. Out of the writings of the fiery African apologist mentioned above, we have a quotation which bestows great honor upon the Church of Rome and which also confirms Peter's stay in that city: "If

you like to delve further into the matter of your salvation, turn to the apostolic churches, where presently the very sees of the apostles exercise their authority upon their neighbors . . . If you live near Achaea, turn to Corinth . . . If, instead, you live somewhere in Italy, there you find Rome, from whom the authority comes even to us [Africans]. Blessed, indeed, is that Church, to whom the apostles poured out the whole doctrine as well as their blood. There Peter was honored with a death similar to that of the Lord; there Paul and John obtained the palm of martyrdom . . ." (*De praescriptione*, xxxvi, a work written around the year 200).

5. The Ecclesiology of Cyprian of Carthage

In face of such compelling testimonies it is difficult to persist in the rejection of the Roman primacy. In fact, today, true historical criticism no longer repeats the old accusations of usurpation of powers, unfounded rights, and the like. Yet, the errors have not disappeared, as in the case of Koch, who gives this version of the primacy: The bishop of Rome passed from the rank of brother to that of teacher, taking the initiative of assuring the Church a central authority. With this act he rendered a valuable service to Christianity, whose strength increased a hundredfold. He alone had the strength and the courage to deal such a master stroke, and this he did in virtue of the native qualities proper to the Latin race. The reward he obtained from it was a fair return for his moral fortitude and loyalty to duty. Now, such an analysis, if not vulgarly hostile, is certainly radically incapable of conveying a proper understanding of the foundation of the primacy and the characteristic function of the bishop of Rome.

It is not pertinent to the scope of this work to examine the content and the effects of the much discussed and still debatable

edict of Callistus, who reigned from 218 to 222. It may be sufficient to mention that the various provisions concerning mixed marriages, the forgiveness of the more serious sins and other grave disciplinary measures show such a fervor of activities, such a complexity of problems at play, and such assuredness of its attributes as to leave no doubt in us of the importance of the Roman See at the beginning of the third century. Even the bitter controversy between Callistus and Hippolytus, who was elected antipope by the oriental group of the Roman community and remained on the scene a long time, proves on the contrary, that the episcopal dignity was much sought after, and that to succeed in placing one's own candidate in such a position meant deriving notable advantages from it. Nor were the Christians of Rome, by now, unknown to the pagans and to the authorities; neither were their relations with them always hostile. Callistus was in financial relations with the bankers of Rome, and Victor obtained through the mediation of Marcia (who, though perhaps a Christian, was a concubine of the emperor Commodus) the liberation of the faithful condemned to forced labors in the mines of Sardinia.

But difficult times were not late in coming, and various bishops crowned their lives with martyrdom. The same is true of Callistus, of his successor Pontianus and also of Hippolytus, who, deported to Sardinia *ad metalla* ("to the lead mines"), became reconciled with the pope. Later, Anterus, Fabian and Sixtus II were also condemned, and Cornelius and others were exiled. We are now at the time of the great persecutions of the middle of the third century. Decius was the first emperor to propose a systematic elimination of Christianity as a real threat to the state structure. The emperor quite understandably was convinced that the ancient state structure was more advantageous to all citizens and that on it depended the very salvation of Rome.

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One of Decius' biographers relates that he considered a bishop of Rome more dangerous than the most powerful of his political enemies. Also, some scholars have been bold enough to affirm that it was the imperial power that gave the pontiffs the prestige and the strength they enjoyed. Actually, when the imperial favors did come, from the fourth century on, the pontiffs had already acquired a solid position and had been able to overcome centuries-old disputes in a fight to the finish against "the great harlot" (pagan Rome) and the antichrists represented by the various holders of the supreme civil power.

The persecutions had also caused some dissensions inside the Christian communities because of some rigorists who were unwilling to re-admit into the Church the lapsed—namely, those who had been unequal to the challenge, but who, after the peril had passed, had repented and were seeking forgiveness. Thus, a schism broke loose in Rome between Novatian and Pope Cornelius (251–253), aggravated by doctrinal differences on the Trinity and by personal bitterness owing to the fact that Novatian had not been chosen head of the Church in spite of his long regency during the vacancy of the see. Something similar happened also in Carthage, but with the positions inverted. Novatus and Felicissimus, who opposed themselves to the bishop, Cyprian, were in fact lapsi, but, out of sheer convenience, had sided with Novatian.

Between Cyprian and Pope Cornelius, instead, there was no complete understanding nor mutual comprehension but, rather, divergent views on various points and a certain clash of personalities. However, conditions became worse when Stephen ascended the Roman Chair (254) and incidents were more frequent and more serious. First among many was the one revolving around the validity of baptism administered by heretics, which was recognized in Rome but not in Carthage, where a greater degree of rigor prevailed as in other sectors of

the African Church. A series of councils confirmed the consensus of all the suffragans around Cyprian, but the African delegates were not even admitted into the presence of the bishop of Rome, who instead directed very severe letters to Carthage threatening excommunication. The sad controversy abated at the death of the protagonists, both martyred with the resumption of the persecution under Valerian, but the final decision in the controversy was postponed to a later date.

During this time Cyprian had the opportunity to express some of his ideas on the organization of the Church and the faculties of the bishop of Rome—ideas which are deserving of careful attention, especially in view of the fact that they have been variously and suspiciously interpreted. For Cyprian the fulcrum of the Church is the bishop and the strength of the bishop resides in his lawful succession to the apostles. But, in saying "Church," one must think, not of a universality embracing all the episcopal sees, but rather of the individual communities, each of which forms an organic unity and is governed with full powers by the local bishop. Thus Cyprian affirms that every bishop is a vicar of Christ and a successor of the apostles, because he holds the place of and represents Christ, and he exercises the same authority as the apostles did. A problem then arises concerning the relations of the various churches among themselves and, above all, with the Church of Rome, and also concerning the pre-eminence of the latter in the ecclesiastical body. In this regard the bishop of Carthage did not have a constant opinion, and it would not be proper to want to find in him one view or a perfect harmony of the different views contained in his writings. Too diverse, on the other hand, were the questions he had to face in those turbulent years. What is certain is his respect for the *cathedra Petri*, the chair of Peter, his explicit and warm acknowledgment of a *principalitas* (principality) of the Church of Rome by which he held

that she was the source of sacerdotal unity and the pattern and model of all the churches, despite the fact that not all had their origin from her. By this, however, Cyprian was not acknowledging the right of Roman intervention in the internal affairs of the other communities. In other words, Cyprian did not hold a primacy of a jurisdictional or legislative order, though he believed that Rome was the primary Church in the order of origin. He recognized that Rome had the responsibility of leading all the churches and was the see where all final decisions were made. In his judgment, the bishop of Rome held the position of promoter of Catholic unity and exercised positive action toward that end. This made it necessary for all other churches to conform to Rome's way of acting. In spite of all this, the fact remains that Cyprian, on account of his late conversion and of his rapid religious formation, never fully understood the value of Peter's prerogatives, although he had a deep and sincere love for the Church. (His is the well-known axiom: "He will not have God as his Father who will not recognize the Church as his mother.") Moreover, he did not act with Pope Stephen in the manner of a subordinate, but more as a colleague who does not hesitate to join a certain amount of boldness to his respect for him. Cyprian accused Stephen of having taken on undue authority, of having arbitrarily constituted himself as superior, and of having acted like a tyrant. But, in spite of this, he did not forget that the *cathedra Petri*, the chair of Peter, is not only a remembrance or a symbol but an actual and operating reality, a permanent institution to which one must refer himself since it is a positive reality in the person of the living successor of the Apostle.

In turn, Stephen exhibited the proper kind of leadership as he kept repeating with unwavering determination: *Nil in- novetur nisi quod traditum est*—"Nothing new is to be introduced that was not given to us." He considered it his duty to

remain loyal to tradition and looked askance at anything that seemed to infringe upon the purity of such tradition.

6. The Position of the Bishop of Rome in the Federation of Ancient Churches

After the grave controversy mentioned above, the history of the Roman pontificate falls into a long period of near inactivity which does not seem to demand a profound scrutiny. Only two episodes deserve to be mentioned in the remaining part of the third century. The first is the letter of Pope Dionysius (259–268) directed to his homonymous bishop of Alexandria, Egypt, in which he criticized some teachings of the Alexandrian bishop about the Blessed Trinity. Though the second Dionysius was an outstanding person and a follower of the tradition of the illustrious school of Alexandria made famous by Clement and Origen, the first Dionysius did not hesitate to perform his duty. He did it, however, with the greatest possible care and avoided any embarrassment for his colleague before the people of his diocese. Dionysius of Alexandria respectfully accepted the correction. Thus, the exercise of the ecclesiastical magisterium of Rome continued unaltered and was accepted also by men and churches of great importance.

Completely different was the other episode. It involved a decision made by Aurelian, the emperor, in a controversy between Paul, bishop of Antioch, and Demetrian called to replace Paul, who had lapsed into dogmatic errors. Since Paul did not wish to leave the episcopal residence, it became necessary to request the intervention of the civil power, and Aurelian decreed that the residence was to be occupied by "those who were the recipients of letters from the bishop of Italy and Rome." Thus, even a stranger, as the emperor was, knew that communion with Rome constituted the essence of Christian life

and a proof of the validity of offices and of doctrinal orthodoxy. This happened in far-away Antioch, the former see of Peter. There is in the decree no hint to indicate that the bishop of Rome had been previously contacted with regard to the question of Paul, or that in some other way the bishop of Rome himself had requested Aurelian to deal with the matter.

The persecution of Diocletian caused many posts to become vacant in the various offices of the Roman Church, and even in the succession of the bishops of Rome there were long periods of vacancy. Moreover, the external difficulties were to affect inevitably the internal life of the community; and, as often happens in similar cases, various groups formed, each accusing the other of defection. Even some bishops came under such attacks with grave consequences for them. Thus, it is not at all sure whether pope Marcellinus came victorious through the trial, for it seems that in a moment of weakness he turned in the sacred books, although ultimately he redeemed himself through martyrdom, which he suffered in 304. Of Marcellus it is known that he was exiled by Maxentius because the group of faithful opposed to him was causing disturbance and disorder in the city. The same happened to Eusebius and to his antagonist Heraclius, both expelled from Rome also by order of Maxentius. Miltiades, instead, in 311 obtained from the same Maxentius restitution of all places of worship confiscated during the persecution. We are now on the eve of the official recognition of Christianity, and it is superfluous to dwell upon the effects that such events had on the entire ecclesiastical organism as well as on the activities and the position of the bishop of Rome. Since we have finished presenting the vicissitudes of the Roman Church in the first centuries of its history with as many details as the importance of the subject demanded, it is proper now to draw some pertinent conclusions.

The "Church" in those days was conceived of as a great

federation of local "Churches," each constituting a perfect and autonomous society, governed by a central authority vested in the bishop, whose duty it was to preserve the deposit of faith and who represented tradition. But because of this, the churches did not cease to belong to the communion of the Catholic unity. As a matter of fact, the tendency among them was to multiply their reciprocal relations and to have the same structure, the same rites and the same Symbol. In this manner, the Church visible coincided with the Church mystical, in a Catholicity shown by the same concentration of each community in itself and by their perfect cohesion in the one faith and in the fundamental institutions.

In such a setting, what position did the bishop of Rome occupy? In other words, were the necessary prerequisites of an apparent primacy present? Obviously, it would be wrong to use as a pattern either the pontifical doctrine of other periods or the declarations of teachers of a later date, for one must not lose sight of the fact that there were still several churches of apostolic foundation. Yet, there was a specific function for the bishop of Rome which implied the exercise of an authority over all. This consisted of a control regarding conformity to the authentic faith, vigilance regarding fidelity to tradition, and the maintenance of communion among the various members of the Christian body. The intervention in the internal life of the local churches, the threat of sanctions, the exclusion from the unity of the Church universal are effects of such privileges and prerogatives which belong exclusively to Rome. This is particularly so since no other church ever claimed such powers; neither did any other ever excommunicate the Church of Rome or even threaten to, while, on the contrary, one bishop of Rome even exaggerated in this regard and was prevented only by death from applying very severe measures.

Incidentally, it may also be noted that the personal qualities

of the individual bishop of Rome had nothing to do with his commanding respect and obtaining obedience. It was the Chair as such that enjoyed veneration and received obedience, for, even while incumbents were changing, the affairs of the Church continued without interruption. Christians were not surprised if, having written to one bishop, they would receive a reply from another who in the meantime had succeeded in office. Actually, it was Peter who was speaking and guiding the Church. It is our duty, however, to acknowledge that during the first three centuries recourse to Rome was rather an exceptional occurrence. It occurred in particularly serious cases: namely, when the faith was in question or when discipline was gravely disturbed. In matters of daily routine and of ordinary administration, the bishops never thought of turning to the pope. It will be only at the end of the fourth century that an important innovation will be introduced which will radically change the system of relations between Rome and the surrounding regions.

Now, concerning its interventions, what was it that permitted Rome to act in such a way without meeting opposition and without receiving rebukes? The answer was given before. It was her truly unique privilege of being the heir of Peter—that is, of perpetuating his office of *princeps apostolorum*, prince of the apostles. Only in Rome—that is, in its bishop—the various parts of Christianity the world over found their meeting point, though already linked with Rome in virtue of her connatural *principalitas*, pre-eminence, and her essential character as custodian of the faith and model of conduct and organization. The fact that the city of Rome was the political capital of the world and the center of the empire when Christianity had its beginning is no decisive factor in explaining the position occupied by its Christian community in the totality of churches, though that probably was an advantageous circumstance and an element that favored mutual communications between the

churches, just as the virtues proper to the Roman people (its practical sense, its discipline, its spirit of endurance in labors) may have facilitated the exercise of ecclesiastical functions. But no member of the churches then existing, some of which were outstanding and powerful, would ever have submitted to Rome for such external and insignificant motives; though, on the other hand, he accepted all that flowed from the *ecclesia Petri*, the "Church of Peter," in the knowledge that the privileges conferred by Christ upon the Apostle were attached to the Church which He had entrusted to him and which, for this very reason, had become the *principalis*, the "leading Church" for all time.

1. The Defense of the Primacy of the Apostolic See

It is one of the ironies of history that Pope Sylvester (314–335), who governed the Church at the same time that Constantine ruled the empire, was one of the least impressive figures among the Roman bishops of the first centuries and one who left few traces of genuine accomplishments. This is said in spite of the wide popularity he enjoyed in his own times, of the great reputation he gained in tradition, and of the many delightful popular legends that were built around him.

The artistic transformations and the great works of embellishment done in his time can be easily explained. For, just as it is true that sooner or later there had to be the advent of a Constantine, since, according to Harnack, a change in the attitude of the empire toward Christianity was inevitable, so it is natural that popular imagination or political interests should have seized on this opportunity and tried in every way to extoll the importance of the event, surrounding it with an aura of the miraculous in an attempt to reap all possible advantages from a situation as exceptional as that which resulted

from the happy encounter of the two greatest authorities in the world.

Sylvester happened to be there to benefit by the situation. However, the process of transformation was obviously slow. It is easy to see how the bishop of Rome was at a disadvantage in the beginning of the new state of things because he had met in the emperor another self, not quite disposed to obedience and certainly eager to gain control over the incalculable force represented by the Catholic episcopate. Out of devotion or by design, Constantine and his successors were very generous in their donations to the various churches. They erected basilicas in honor of the apostles and rendered formal homage to the bishop of the "old Rome." Partly because of a habit acquired in the long exercise of absolute power and military discipline, partly because of the conditions in which they found themselves, seeing everywhere the surging of threats and opposition to the stability of the empire, they had planned to dominate also the ecclesiastical hierarchy, making it a servile instrument of the government. This would have enabled them to regulate all religious matters by the yardstick of political interests. The Roman pontiff constituted the principal obstacle to such a plan, since he was the center of the entire Catholic order, the soul of the Christian body, and an authority above control. Had they succeeded in breaking down all resistance from him, there would have been no obstacle whatsoever to the establishment of a perfect Caesaro-papism, and the civil ruler would have thus exercised absolute dominion over the soul and body of his subjects, imposing his will upon them in the name of God.

Taken under this aspect, the history of the papacy in the fourth century acquires a significance of exceptional value; and those events keep an undiminished sense of actuality in that they reveal, beyond the limits of individual personalities and

events, the perennial struggle between freedom and tyranny, the individual and the State, the spirit and oppression.

2. The Arian Controversy and Liberius

The long and complicated Arian controversy (aside from the strictly theological aspect, which does not interest us at the moment) meant this: On one side, it was an attempt by the imperial power to win over the bishops and obtain in exchange for various favors their assent to official political directives; on the other side, it represented an act of resistance by a group of truly outstanding men who in their effort would be greatly aided by Rome. In fact, it was Pope Julius I (337-352) who received Athanasius, the champion of orthodoxy ousted from his see of Alexandria, and who convened councils to counteract the oriental councils which had accepted the Arian formulae. It was his successor, Liberius, who refused gifts and promises from emperor Constantius and who suffered exile to far away Beroea in Thrace, after having been secretly kidnapped from his see because his followers had risen to his defense and had rebelled against the police-methods of imperial representatives. It was Damasus, however, who in the end gathered the fruits of his predecessors' resistance, for Theodosius gave official recognition to his religion as the religion of the empire and made communion with Rome a sign by which Christians were to be recognized. Similar situations will recur later in the relations between Rome and Constantinople, between priesthood and empire, but for the moment the first grave crisis was successfully composed.

It is necessary to go back a little, in order that other events may be noted which are closely related to the history of the pontificate in that century. At the Council of Nicaea (325), the first great assembly of the Christian world now free to express

its faith and to discuss its problems, the West was present with a minimal representation as compared to the number of Easterners who took part in it. The legates of the bishop of Rome were two ordinary priests, to whom no particular honor was accorded. Notwithstanding this, and almost against all hope, the Western doctrine prevailed in the assembly, because the Creed used by the Roman Church on the occasion of baptism was adopted as the doctrinal basis and the lawful summary of all the truths of faith. A believer can fittingly speak of a providential inspiration as having guided the decisions relative to the exact determination of the human-divine personality of Christ and of His relations to the Father. Thus Rome continued to exercise, even though indirectly, its magisterial function. Rome then made the strongest possible defense against any aberration from the Symbol of Nicaea. In the meantime another aspect of papal authority, that concerning discipline, was making considerable progress. In fact, at the Council of Serdica (343), it was acknowledged that the Roman See had the right to rescind sentences of provincial councils in cases in which a bishop appealed to Rome, and also to remit the cause to another council for a definitive decision. Obviously, it was not yet the fullness of rights such as the popes exercised later, but it was a step forward in centralizing all faculties in Rome, in Rome's intervention in matters affecting the life of individual dioceses, and in considering Rome arbiter and moderator of the entire Christian society.

The Council of Serdica was held while Julius was pontiff in Rome. In his letters one perceives a sense of universality that is characteristic of the Roman Church and the consciousness of a primatial authority that is not bound by decisions of ecclesiastical assemblies or limited by the rights of the other apostolic churches. Moreover, in his writings he always showed a keen sense of duty relative to the observance of the canons, the

preservation in the bosom of the Church of revealed truths, and their interpretation and transmission to future generations.

Mention was made of Liberius' courageous resistance to the insidious offerings from Constantius. The dialog between Liberius and the official Leontius, who was charged with the task of persuading the bishop to accede to the demands, is reminiscent of the dialogs between the martyrs and their persecutors. Nevertheless, it is a duty to report also that the incident ended in a far less flattering way than one might have hoped. There exists a vast amount of literature about the "case of Liberius," and the alleged "fall" of this pope was one of the strongest arguments used by those who opposed the dogmatic declaration of papal infallibility.

Adhering to historical facts, we shall say that—aside from sources universally held as spurious: namely, four famous letters appended to a writing by St. Hilary and openly hostile to Liberius—there exist a testimony of St. Jerome and several quite general phrases from St. Athanasius against Liberius. Actually, in his writing St. Hilary of Poitiers does not speak of Liberius' attitude. Moreover, in the epigraph which his successor, Damasus, ordered to be placed on his tomb, Liberius is eulogized as *immaculatus papa* ("an immaculate pope") whose *fides semper firma fuit* ("faith remained always firm"). Undoubtedly, following a long period of exile and suffering, Liberius must have had a momentary weakness, as a consequence of the collapse of his resistance. In the regions in which he was, the theories of one Basil of Ancyra were generally accepted. Basil was a moderate Arian, constantly tending toward orthodoxy as a reaction to Arian exaggerations as well as to arbitrary actions by the emperor himself.

It is not unlikely that Liberius may have accepted one of these vague and somewhat confused formulae, thereby deflecting from the traditionally rigid defense of the Nicene Symbol,

which had been the glory of the Roman See. But it does not necessarily follow that by such an act he had intended to subscribe to the error of those who denied the divinity of Christ and the eternal generation of the Word. Upon his return to Rome, he was received with great enthusiasm by the faithful, and the one whom the emperor had put in his place was forced to depart from the city, despite his efforts to remain in the post. Before his death, Liberius showed great generosity toward those who had signed some Arian-tinted formula. Undoubtedly, he was prompted to do this by a desire to bring about a general conciliation, now that with the death of Constantius the heresy had lost its principal ally; but it is not impossible that the remembrance of his own weakness may have played some little part in it. However, in writing to the Orientals, he did not fail to remind them of the *Nicaenum*. Thus the flag of papal prestige, which, because of some unhappy events, had momentarily been pulled down, was flying again over the skies of Rome.

3. *The Great Pontiffs of the End of the Fourth Century*

The beginning of the pontificate of Damasus (366–384) was plagued with great difficulties. Obstinate and violent opposition by Ursinus and a group of ecclesiastics gave rise in Rome to bloody struggles, exiles and repeated interventions by the civil authority. After a period of relative tranquillity, Damasus was subjected to the humiliation of appearing before the vicar of Rome to defend himself against the charge of homicide, brought against him by a converted Jew named Isaac, aided by false witnesses.

Having weathered these preliminary difficulties, Damasus was then able to dedicate himself to his priestly activities. He convened numerous councils, attended to the embellishment of churches and devoted considerable attention to the care of the

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catacombs. His contacts with the imperial court were frequent. Numerous too were the relations he established with other dioceses and many outstanding personalities of all parts of the world who were bringing great luster to the Church. All these facts show that the Roman See had become a center of activities of world-wide importance and that it enjoyed undisputed authority everywhere. To underscore this state of things, a new expression was introduced which indicated the titles of priority of the episcopate of Rome. This new term was *Sedes apostolica*—"Apostolic See." Damasus used it in his epigraphs, Augustine accepted it, Leo the Great later brought it into current use. Up to this time, the expression was not and could not be used exclusively by Rome, because the memory of the apostolic foundation of various Christian communities was still fresh. But since in the West there were no other sees that could claim such an honor, the "Apostolic See" par excellence was that of Peter. The East in the beginning raised some difficulty as to the use of that title but then accepted it, asking in return that Constantinople, "the new Rome," be accorded the second place in order of dignity in the Catholic hierarchy. This would have given that see a preferential position over more ancient and illustrious metropolitan sees, such as Antioch, Jerusalem, Alexandria and others.

Moreover, Damasus asserted his doctrinal authority, declaring that anything whatsoever decided in the councils was void unless it was approved by the bishop of Rome, "whose view must be sought before anything else."

Thus he sent to Bishop Paulinus of Antioch a "Profession of Catholic Faith" covering all the points on which he must agree and all the doctrines to be accepted by those who wish to participate in the communion of the Catholic Church. As mentioned above, in an edict of February 27, 390, even the emperor Theodosius made public his promise to profess the

religion "already taught by the Apostle Peter to the Romans and presently proclaimed by Pope Damasus." But the most important contribution with regard to the recognition of the bishop of Rome was made several years earlier by the young emperor, Gratian, who, in order to give proof of his devotion to the only true pontiff, turned over to the bishop of Rome the title "Pontifex Maximus," "Supreme Pontiff," which until then had been used by his own predecessors, and, with the constitution *Ordinarius*, also modified the decisions reached at Serdica with regard to the appeals made to Rome by the bishops. The pontiff's rights were extended more and more, and even the imperial police force was placed at his disposal for the execution of ecclesiastical sentences. Someone has called this situation a scandalous one, insinuating that papal authority progressed simply because it was favored by the state and declaring that the above-mentioned constitution is to be considered the foundation of the primacy of the bishop of Rome. In reality, the Roman Empire was by now very weak and the effectiveness of the influence from the central government was next to nil. Papal superiority was based on an original right all of its own, much more lawful and effective. But these events are a sign of a historical trend leading to the establishment of closer ties between civil and ecclesiastical society, and a progressive fusion of the religious and political ideologies capable of offering the best protection to the best values of civilization—a fusion that responded more appropriately to the spiritual and material needs of humanity.

To Damasus' successors, Siricius (384–399) and Innocent (401–417), is generally attributed the introduction of the decretals, or letters of reply to inquiries made by bishops on various questions of ordinary administration. Undoubtedly, the custom of such inquiries and the respective replies by the pontiff containing clarifications on controverted points assumed larger

proportions toward the end of the fourth century and the beginning of the fifth. However, this was not an innovation, but rather an inevitable consequence of the general conditions of the times. We shall underscore only the principal phases of this situation. First of all, the cleavage between the Christianity of the West and that of the East was becoming more and more definite, while many of the privileges dispensed by the pope affected only the first of the two. In this regard, a distinction must be made between the zone immediately subject to Rome, comprising the suburbicarian churches of Latium, the churches of Campania, Tuscany, Umbria, Picenum, Sardinia, Apulia, Calabria, Bruttium, Lucania, Sicily and Corsica, and the zone comprising the area beyond this, which was divided among the various metropolitan heads (Carthage, Aquileia, Milan, Arles, etc.). The bishops of the first zone were consecrated by the pontiff, frequently convened in councils under his presidency, supervised and admonished by him with vigilant interest. On the contrary, the pope's ties with the others were not as close, although all recognized Rome as the Mother Church, center of communion, and custodian of discipline. "*Romana sedes hoc specialiter custodit legis scientiam, traditiones*," as was said: "The Roman See is in a special way the custodian of the knowledge of law and tradition." Rome's relations with the East were becoming every day more strained, but for reasons of convenience we shall postpone all discussion of such conditions since the major disputes began around the middle of the fifth century. At this point, we shall say only that the Church of Constantinople was insistent that Rome take the patriarchal title of the West, prompted in this solely by a design to claim for herself the patriarchal title of the East. Clearly, it was from a desire, not to become Rome's equal and thus divide the area between them, but to dominate the other more ancient sees of the East. The popes, however, adhering to the dispositions of

the Council of Nicaea, and careful to prevent opening the way to major and more dangerous usurpations by those bishops who were too closely tied to political authorities, consistently refused to recognize such a claim.

Secondly, we cannot fail to mention the vindication by the pontiffs of their absolute right to receive appeals from all the faithful who may have felt themselves victims of unfair decisions by their local superiors. If we compare this new element with the decisions of the Council of Serdica and those of the emperor Gratian mentioned above, we will not fail to notice the great progress made in favor of papal authority. In fact, the bishop of Rome was widening his jurisdiction to cover also the faithful, whereas before this it had extended only to the higher clergy. By this new development he also became a judge of last instance, since until now he could only rescind sentences and remand them to another tribunal for a new judgment. Besides the *ex officio* intervention of the popes in the disciplinary affairs of the local churches, another "innovation" is noticeable in this period—the sending of numerous pontifical legations to the various dioceses for the purpose of solving difficulties, imposing rules, clarifying misunderstandings. In short, it was a new way by which the voice of Rome was carried everywhere, the voice of the place where, as the Council of Elvira declared, "the first episcopal chair was established."

Truly, to speak of a centralization of power would seem to be an exaggeration, because the bishops were not yet obliged to accept papal regulations, nor did the initiative rest exclusively with Rome. It is certain, however, that by now such a state of mind existed in the whole of Christianity that the bishops were morally committed to favor the intervention of Rome.

Going back to the question of the decretals, from which we departed for the above digression, it may suffice to observe that they were letters of a general character concerning all matters

of discipline and worship, such as admission to baptism, penance, sacred orders; reconciliation of heretics; matrimonial cases, and so forth. While up to the time of Siricius papal letters were consistently of a cordial nature, slightly bureaucratic, but without compromise on questions of principles; the letters of Siricius, Anastasius I and Innocent I instead are styled as official documents, showing not only a full consciousness of the supreme apostolic power but also the exercise of absolute authority and the right to make final decisions: "You consulted the Church of Rome as the head of the body of which you are a part. We believe to have replied fully to your questions. Now, so that the canons may be honored and the decrees observed, we urge you to bring our replies to the attention of all the other bishops, not only those of your province but also of the neighboring provinces." From the entire context it appears that those popes were not only good theologians but perhaps even more capable administrators, who issued orders and rescripts (according to whether the documents were directed to one or more persons) and expected that their deliberations would be followed as official decisions. In fact, at the beginning of the sixth century, Dionysius Exiguus began to collect those documents into canonical collections which enjoyed an authority similar to that accorded to the deliberations of the councils. In time, those collections increased and later were incorporated into the *Corpus juris canonici*.

4. *Recognition by the Fathers of the Church*

Even the great fathers of the Church, who flourished in the fourth century and who by their writings erected the most lasting monument of Christian thinking, treated more or less fully this point of ecclesiastical doctrine. They expounded the powers of the bishop of Rome, praised his function and extolled his

merits. Perhaps, a greater exactness of concepts in the manner of an explicit formulation of papal prerogatives would seem desirable in the fathers. However, if we examine their mentality, their characteristic concept of the Church, the supremacy they gave to the spiritual over the organizational element and to the bond of love over bureaucratic relations, we will find ample justification for a certain lack of details and for some reticence. Yet, Basil the Great acknowledged that Peter was appointed head of the apostles, always believed in the bishops of Rome as being successors of Peter, and held as proper the frequent intervention of the Church of Rome into the affairs of the other churches. Only in regard to the complicated matter of the schism of Antioch did he use harsh words against Damasus, though he acknowledged his "eminent dignity." Gregory of Nazianzen called Rome "the head of all" and admired the salutary influence exercised by Rome. John Chrysostom left ample and enthusiastic commentaries on the passages of the Gospel relative to Peter, stating that the Church was established upon him, that Jesus Christ gave him not only the power to teach and the honor of being the head but also the actual government and a universal administration. Because John was long a resident of Antioch, he did not speak extensively of the dignity of Rome, obviously out of respect for the first see of Peter. But when, as bishop of Constantinople, he was ousted from his see on account of intrigues in the court, he appealed to the bishop of Rome, Innocent I, who came to his rescue. Later, Innocent also obtained a posthumous rehabilitation of John and the annulment of the "unjust sentence issued against him by a council all too subservient to the emperor." Coming to the West, we find Jerome who insisted on the necessity of consulting the Roman See because she is the supreme rule and the decisive norm of revealed truth, having preserved incorrupt the heritage of the fathers and the faith as it came

out of the mouth of the apostles. However, the two most eminent and authoritative witnesses of Western thought in this matter are Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, and Augustine, Bishop of Hippo. Not much is known concerning the relations between Ambrose and the popes. Nonetheless, in view of the tone of Ambrose' letters, of a certain reluctance shown in going to Rome, and of the fact that Ambrose held a position of favor because Milan was at that time the seat of the empire, it can be said, without fear of being mistaken, that Rome looked with coolness and a certain amount of displeasure upon Ambrose' intervention in the affairs of other dioceses. In Ambrose' writings one looks in vain for any explicit reference to the Church of Rome as possessing a universal jurisdiction, although he is certain that the faith of Rome is proof and guarantee of the quality of doctrine professed by the various churches. These churches constitute the body of Christ only in that they are held together by the Church of Rome, and the only way of being sure of divine life is by being a part of that Church. "From her flow to all the churches the rights of the ancient communion."

The famous motto *Ubi Petrus, ibi ecclesia*—"Where Peter is, there is also the Church" read in its context takes a different meaning in that it refers personally to Peter, not to his successors. Peter fell from grace but he arose, because with him was the Church and, wherever the Church is, there cannot be either error or death. Nevertheless, the passage is still important because it establishes an unbreakable bond between Peter and the Church. But Ambrose took pleasure in bringing out also the work of Paul and insisted on the fact of his independence from Peter, so as to hint at the type of relations which must exist between the episcopate and the bishops of Rome, with a certain freedom being allowed to the major churches in their relations with the Church of Rome. "It is certain," says Soranzo, "that the doctrine of the primacy of honor and of jurisdiction of the

bishop of Rome was not yet categorically observed or actualized as an obligation in the customs of the time, nor do the writings of Ambrose show it." But by such appraisals one must not be led to exaggerated conclusions with regard to Ambrose' ecclesiology and his sentiments toward the popes. Whatever he may have said in some of his writings, he always remained faithful to a declaration sent to Siricius which could be considered as his basic thought on the papacy: "Whatever you condemn we too shall condemn, because in your words we have found the solicitude of the good shepherd who protects diligently the Lord's sheep and guards the doors of the house entrusted to him. Therefore, you deserve to be heard and followed by the faithful of the Lord."

In the writings of Augustine prior to 416, there is no testimony relative to the place occupied by the Roman See, except for an isolated text in which he acknowledges that "the sovereignty of the Apostolic See has always flourished." Even when, during the various disputes, it might have seemed convenient for him to appeal to the principle of communion with Rome, Augustine did not; neither did he invoke Rome's authority. However, in the complex Pelagian dispute, the African bishops turned to Pope Innocent I, to whom they sent a report on their meetings and from whom they received some rescripts (this juridical term is appropriate here and recurs many times in Augustine's writings), on the strength of which definitive decisions were taken. It was on such an occasion that the bishop of Hippo pronounced the famous judgment: "With regard to this question [the Pelagian heresy], the deliberations of two councils were sent to the Apostolic See, and dispositions have now been received. Therefore, the dispute is over, and may God speed also the end of the error!" (*Sermo cxxxi*). The Augustinian statement was shortened and reduced to the fa-

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mous axiom: *Roma locuta est, causa finita est*—"Rome has spoken, the dispute is ended."

According to Augustine's judgment, Rome's decisions in dogmatic controversies are equivalent to those of the councils and the authority of the bishop of Rome is that of a supreme arbiter with power to perform acts that have the force of law for all. We can, then, conclude that the Roman See is the Apostolic See par excellence, the one which guarantees the communion of the other churches with the "Catholic" communion.

In turn, replying to inquiries made by bishops, the pontiffs availed themselves of the opportunity to draft real treatises on the Roman primacy. Thus, Siricius, in his decretal to Himerius, bishop of Tarragona (385), stated: "The Apostle Peter lives personally in the bishop of Rome. If the pontiff bears the responsibility of all those who are in need of his help, he is certain that the blessed Apostle bears it with him and in him and that he protects the one who is the heir of his administration and is therefore invested of duties and rights that the bishop of the Apostolic See possesses alone, and not in common with other bishops."

Innocent I, in the year 417, admonished that "when a matter of faith is in question, I believe that all our brother bishops must refer themselves to no other except the pontiff, author of their episcopal dignity." Rome, in fact, is "an incorruptible fountainhead whose waters are brought everywhere" and its rescripts must be communicated to the entire world. Similar concepts are found also in Boniface and in Zosimus, who, for instance, in one of his letters in 418, explicitly declared: "The tradition of the fathers always recognized such authority as resting in the Apostolic See to a point that it never dared dispute its decisions."

At the base of this whole series of documents lies the concept

that Peter is forever living and operating in his Church, because the bishop of Rome is identified with him and, seated in his chair, acts as if Peter himself were acting. The technical term used to indicate such relation was that of "vicar," as indicated above, and it expressed the substitution of person between the Apostle (Peter) and each of his successors. The title *vicarius Petri*, "vicar of Peter," became in this period more widely and authoritatively used. It was the most accurate testimony of the great progress made in a short time by the theology of papal primacy.

5. *The Pontificate of Leo the Great*

The historian Caspar, using an appropriate and effective description, stated that Pope Leo I is not an isolated summit, but the highest peak of a chain. This image was used to indicate that the greatness of his pontificate and the precision of his doctrine with regard to the powers of the bishop of Rome are, not a new exploit or the starting point of a daring venture, but the logical conclusion of a centuries-old development. They represent the highest degree of consciousness achieved as the effect of the regular and wise activities exercised by his predecessors. Moreover, one finds in Leo the Great clarity of concepts, a firm certitude about his rights, and total dedication to the cause he is serving. The length of his pontificate (440–461), furthermore, the large number of historical documents concerning his work, and the legend that formed in the Middle Ages around the imposing and beneficent figure of the pope—all contributed to make of Leo a model pope.

When the people of Rome selected the deacon Leo to succeed Sixtus III, the candidate was away on a political mission in Gaul. So well known were his outstanding qualities, both in Rome and outside, that without hesitation or disagreement all

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waited a month for his return. He was considered, more than any other, capable of facing the difficulties of the times. Nor did Leo fail them in their expectations, for he immediately undertook the tasks of ridding Rome of all heretics, of restoring churches, of preaching to the faithful regularly on the various solemnities of the year, and of maintaining relations with the political power. Casting his eyes, as it were, over the entire West, Leo showed a vivid interest in the religious life of the various countries. His letters written to bishops on disciplinary and administrative questions, not including those on dogmatic or spiritual matters, run into the hundreds. The episcopate showed toward him not only a sense of devotion and dependence but real affection and confidence. This made it possible for him to handle delicate situations and solve many complicated questions in a spirit of charity and understanding.

Nor shall we omit mentioning the famous encounter between Leo and Attila, even if the historical import of the event has been greatly exaggerated. As a matter of fact, the barbarian leader did not consent to withdraw from Italy only on the strength of the pontiff's pleas; the pope was not alone, and he did not speak only in his own name when he presented himself before the invader. Nevertheless, the nobility of his intent stands above criticism, the decision was full of meaning, and the precedent set by Leo's action was important for similar future situations.

Less successful was Leo's intervention with Genseric, the king of the Vandals, who a year or so later attacked Rome from the sea and sacked the city without scruple or restraint.

His relations with the East were almost completely absorbed by the disputes caused by the Monophysite heresy and the political interventions tied with it. In the *Tomus* which he directed to Flavian, Bishop of Constantinople, Leo laid down with precision the thought of the Church in this matter and censured

the participants in the Council of Ephesus, held in 449, which he called a "Robbery." Thus, even when an imposing Council was convened at Chalcedon, after the Catholic Marcian ascended the throne, Leo was not fully pleased because, unbeknown to his legates, disciplinary decisions were taken which were not altogether pleasing to Rome. In spite of this, the declarations of the participants are very significant: "You came even to us, you were to us the interpreter of the voice of blessed Peter and brought to all of us the blessing of his faith. We were able to show the truth to the children of the Church in the communion of the same spirit, participating in the spiritual joys which Christ had prepared for us through your letters. We were five hundred bishops, guided by you as the head guides the members."

Even the condemnation of Dioscorus, the one responsible for the "Robber Council" of Ephesus, is full of solemnity: "The holy and blessed bishop of the ancient and great Rome, in union with the blessed Apostle Peter, pillar of the Catholic Church and foundation of the true faith, has deprived him of his episcopal dignity and of any other priestly authority."

Leo conceived of the Christian community as one based on a solid hierarchical constitution, and it was inconceivable to him that it could culminate in any other body except the papacy. It is true that all the members of the higher clergy possess the same priestly dignity, but their jurisdictional power ("solicitude") varies, for even among the apostles there was equality of honor but a difference in *discretio potestatis*, the division of their power. In fact, Peter alone had been filled with grace by the one who is the fountain-spring of all charisms, and nothing came to the others except through him who possessed all privileges: "Christ willed that His gifts should come down to the entire body through Peter, as by the head all the other members are directed." But Peter lives now in his successors, the

bishops of Rome, and to them therefore was passed the entire authority that was conferred on him. The central point of Leo's conception of the primacy is in the idea of "vicariate" (*vice Petri*), which did not originate with Leo but which he undoubtedly developed more profoundly than was done before him. According to Leo, the pontiff is the heir of Peter, and the bishops of Rome are *sedis ipsius consortes*, "sharers of his see." Thus, the Church is governed by Peter; and it is Peter who blesses the bishops who come to pay him honor in his see, in which even an unworthy successor may be sitting at the time. However unworthy he may be, he possesses the most ample powers, and the "dignity" of the Roman See will never fail, no matter how great the incapability of its incumbent. Therefore, all must come to the pope as to an infallible teacher, and whoever dares depart from the solid rock of Peter would by this very fact place himself out of the faith and beyond salvation. It is the duty of the pope to protect the sheepfold and to put down all disobedience to the laws established by the canons. Failing to correct the errants, he would become guilty of negligence and would himself go against the "rules and regulations" which constitute the source of ecclesiastical power. The responsibility of the office constituted for Leo a matter of trepidation, but nothing could make him deflect from his fidelity to the old traditions. The primary purpose of all his actions was, in fact, the care of the universal Church, and even those acts which at first may have seemed to be the effect of a desire for power were always directed to the good of Christianity.

6. Pope Gelasius—*The Case of Vigilius*

The disappearance of claimants to the office of Roman emperor of the West, and the final split in the unity of government and administration in this area, enhanced notably the

prestige and the function of the Roman pontiff. By force of events, the pope had fallen immediate heir to and most logical representative of the imperial mission and tasks. The moral position of the bishop of Rome waxed very high, but also the difficulties increased owing to the fact that he was forced to interpret the needs of Europe to Byzantium and to assume the defense of the traditions of a civilization threatened by barbarians who now dominated the West.

The pontiffs then in office quickly became aware of the new situation and undertook to perpetuate the unitarian concept of imperial Rome by carrying out, with full consciousness of the gravity of the task, a courageous action of assimilation of the young German peoples into civil and political life. The religious concept of universality constantly defended by the Church was becoming a political reality, since the Catholic religion, and no longer the Roman Empire, was the unifying force the world needed. We are already in the medieval atmosphere of the *sancta respublica* of the Christians, in which the political organizations will work together with the religious for the achievement of the spiritual and material welfare of man.

It was Gelasius I (492–496) who presented such a program with clarity and precision, restating the independence of the papal *auctoritas* (authority) from the royal *potestas* (power), adding that if both were of divine origin and destined to govern the world with separate autonomous functions, the first possessed a greater dignity because it was entrusted by God, the *summus et verus imperator* ("supreme and true emperor"), with the care of souls, which entitled it to rule over civil sovereigns also. The conclusion which Gelasius drew from this was that the popes, as custodians of the faith, had the faculty to judge whether or not the emperors were fulfilling the mission for which they had acquired the power. This power had been given to them for the benefit of religion and subordinately to

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ecclesiastical directives. Thus, with Gelasius the papal *principatus* (sovereignty) triumphed. This term was not introduced by him, because in 422 Pope Boniface had already declared that "the Apostolic See holds the sovereignty to judge all causes, and this power comes to her from the honor [position of primacy] held by Peter." However, this principle had not been enforced before on account of the reluctance of the imperial court to acknowledge such fullness of sovereignty in others. No sooner had the empire ceased to exist than the papal curia made a wide use of the term, stating that "the Apostolic See, by order of Jesus Christ, possessed sovereignty over the whole Church."

The fact cannot be ignored that, as a result of her increased prestige, the Roman Church came into possession of large incomes obtained from extensive patrimonies of land, and of immense artistic treasures collected in edifices of worship, which were rapidly increasing with the years. The great dignity and the supreme power enjoyed by the episcopal see of Rome was responsible also for the special honor which came to the city itself as the residence of the head of the Church. This gave Rome a glory no other title could have matched. This concept recurs frequently in the writings of the pontiffs of this period who, comparing the pagan with the Christian Rome, eulogized the new Rome, regenerated by the blood of the Apostles and now become the center of an empire far vaster and more lasting than the preceding one. The passages are too well known to be repeated here, but the thought needed to be underscored because it is an important element with regard to the ideological changes from antiquity to the Middle Ages. It was a delicate matter, indeed, since it marked a transition from one civilization to another and, although the new civilization in some way perpetuated the preceding one, it was dialectically in antithesis to the former's premises as well as its aim.

Finally, to further clarify the situation there is another

factor which deserves to be mentioned at this time. It was the relapse of the East into heresy following the publication of the *Henoticon*, a letter sent to the bishops (482) by emperor Zenon, in which ideas all too favorable to Monophysitism were expressed. It may well have been blackmail in view of the fact that the West was in the hands of barbarians, and presumably the popes would have to turn to Byzantium in order to be helped out of their present calamity. Instead, the positions were reversed: Acacius, the patriarch of Constantinople who had inspired the *Henoticon*, was solemnly excommunicated in the following decree: "You are deprived of your priesthood and severed from the universal communion. This condemnation is inflicted upon you by the judgment of the Holy Spirit and by the apostolic authority of which we are the custodian." Moreover, Acacius had to bear a further humiliation while celebrating Mass in St. Sophia, of seeing the decree pinned to his tunic by some monks who were faithful to Rome, after a legate of the pontiff had secretly entered Constantinople.

The courageous attitude of Gelasius was not followed by all, nor did it go unopposed. After his death, the two currents contending for the direction of the government in the Roman See, one intransigent toward the East, the other more conciliatory, clashed and a grave schism resulted, with the archpriest Laurentius heading one group, the deacon Symmachus the other. As often happens in such cases, the honesty of the contending parties was placed under suspicion, violence resulted in the street of Rome and extraneous forces were called into the religious conflict. In the meantime, various synods were called in an effort to reconcile the two factions and to ascertain which side was right. In the end Symmachus prevailed, and this strengthened the position of Theodoric, king of the Ostrogoths. The Orientalists, instead, were compelled to withdraw. But Symmachus' successor, Hormisdas (514-523), forgave the fol-

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lowers of Laurentius and composed all differences with Byzantium, now that the Catholic Justin had ascended the imperial throne. After a few years, however, the scale weighed on Byzantium's side, because Theodoric had changed his pro-Roman attitude and the dissension had become more definite, with the military element of the Goths on one side and the Roman and the Byzantine ruling groups on the other. Things reached a new low when the Arian king sent Pope John as ambassador to Constantinople. This was indeed a grave humiliation for the pope, and Justin, recognizing immediately that this event represented for him an unexpected boon, covered the pope with great honors. John was the first pope who had come to the Eastern capital in a function other than that of a conqueror.

Another ambassadorial mission at the court of Justinian was performed by Pope Agapetus (535) on behalf of Theodoric. Justinian, a nephew of and successor to Emperor Justin, was showing great zeal for the Catholic faith and doing everything in his power to enter into the graces of the pontiffs. This irritated the Monophysites, still numerous and strong in the East, who were trying to regain the ground they had lost. With the cooperation of some local elements, they prevailed upon General Belisarius to depose Pope Silverius (536-38) on the strange accusation of betrayal while Rome was besieged by the Goths. Since Silverius refused to nullify the condemnation of Monophysitism, he was sent into exile to a monastery in Lycia.

Vigilius, a more condescending man, succeeded him without delay. However, he was not found acceptable to the Romans and, shortly after his election, he was sent or brought to Constantinople. In his place, the deacon Pelagius, a future pontiff, performed a beneficent mission during a new attack upon Rome by Totila, and did not disdain personally to implore the mercy of the king in behalf of Roman citizens, who were in extreme want from absolute lack of food.

In the capital of the empire, the unfortunate pontiff Vigilius had to bear all kinds of pressure for years. Eventually, his resistance collapsed. On April 11, 548, he directed a letter called a *Judicatum* ("sentence") to the patriarch of Constantinople in which in substance he consented to the condemnation of the "Three Chapters," that is, the Antiochean authors opposed to the Monophysitic doctrine, though he added many qualifications directed at saving the authority of the Council of Chalcedon. The entire West reacted immediately, and even among those close to the pontiff there were several, Pelagius among them, who severely criticized his action. Impressed by this reaction, Vigilius tried to back down, but was arrested and, after a short period of seeming tranquillity, fled to Chalcedon. In 553 an ecumenical council was convened at Constantinople, but Vigilius was not present. He sent, instead, another document, the *Constitutum*, which contained a notable change with respect to the position taken before. The emperor became angry, and the pontiff repudiated him.

After the narration of the preceding events all observations would seem superfluous, since the methods and the effects of Caesaro-papism speak clearly for themselves. These were the "most Christian" emperors who did not hesitate to depose some popes, jail others, establish dogmatic formulae, set up rites which were more to their liking. Even when they did not reach such extremes, relations between Church and State in that particular period were not conducted according to justice and equity. In fact, after the time of the Byzantine conquest of Italy, it was the custom that the pontiff was not consecrated before the election acts were returned from Constantinople bearing the seal of imperial approval. Moreover, this subservience of the pope to Byzantium remained a matter of fact, even after his access to the highest ecclesiastical office; and this

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implied obligations and ties which had the effect of obstructing the entire papal function. In conclusion, if one looks beyond the high-sounding formulae and a few laudatory expressions with regard to the papal dignity and the glory of Christian Rome, it is certain that insofar as the Byzantines were concerned, the true and only head of society was still the emperor, from whom all final decisions, even in religious matters, were sought. Thus, Gelasius' concepts were reversed with a definite loss for papal authority, and a large part of the results in favor of the Roman primacy achieved earlier went for naught.

In such difficult conditions, the popes generally did all that was humanly possible to maintain their freedom and protect the dignity of their office. It must not be forgotten that, while the East indulged in the kind of pressures mentioned above, in Italy the Goths took a hostile position against the Romans and caused very extensive damage to the entire peninsula in the course of their long war against the Byzantines. To aggravate the already bad situation, a few years after this war, the Lombards descended upon Italy spreading destruction in their path.

Decades of terrible poverty and disorganization ensued; and, amid such tragic moral and material ruin, the Holy See found itself in the compelling necessity of providing food, saving ancient monuments, and even of placing its own officials in the various civil posts in order that the welfare of an abandoned populace might be duly protected. Thus, the popes ended by becoming involved in complex questions of a material nature, having to make decisions concerning all aspects of civil life, and becoming the owners of great possessions. Were they guilty in concerning themselves with these matters? Or can they be justly accused of betraying their spiritual mission? It must be acknowledged that in times of such great dis-

gress the *virtus Petri*, the "strength of Peter," was Rome's only protection—and perhaps Italy's, too. Actually, the protection of the Apostle was the most effective arm of defense, and only from his vicar did there come forth light and comfort for the present and a ray of hope for a better tomorrow.

1. Temporal Cares and Difficulties of the Early Middle Ages

From reading the letters and the dialogues of Pope Gregory the Great (590–604) one receives a frightening impression of ruin and violence raging throughout Europe. The prayers of the pope to be freed from the weight of many misfortunes were frequent and very fervent. Were we to hold to the contents of those pages, we might well think that no alternative was left the men of those days except to wait for the end of the world in penitence and prayer.

However, if one overcomes the first pessimistic impression and considers historical truth objectively, it is possible to realize that, under such a vivid semblance of death, a new life was making its way and that, by means of a painful gestation, a society was being formed which surpassed the old, as it blended together elements of diverse origin. Such is, in fact, the historical significance of those dark and fierce centuries, and their painful but fertile contribution to Western civilization. These events have been called the dawn of Europe because it is through such hidden forces at work that Christian and Roman

Europe was founded, from which even today all that is civilized and great in the world derives its vitality.

2. The Apostolate of Gregory the Great

However, the whole movement revolved around one axis, the bishop of Rome; and the only animating force of the whole vast social body of Europe was the Catholic faith. The same Gregory the Great, even amid anguish and bewilderment, gave proof of untiring beneficent activity and saw with clear vision the proper course to follow. The same can be said of his successors, independently of their personal merits or weaknesses, their ability shown in individual contingencies or the political errors which they committed. The papacy was the main if not the sole force capable of giving form to a new historical reality, whose character in its basic lines did not change for several centuries.

The popes' preoccupation with the achievement of a spiritual and practical unification of western Europe carried within itself, as a logical consequence, the progressive separation from the East. And the East, in turn, was molding its own civilization, the Byzantine, original and rich with life, even if remote from Western mentality and culture. This separation had several significant manifestations in the religious field and, we may say, in the disciplinary field even more so than in the dogmatic. In fact, if the controversies between the Latin and the Greek churches revolved also around various doctrinal points, the break was really due to the incompatibility of two primatial sees—that is, the reluctance of Byzantium to accept Roman superiority, the ambition of the patriarchs of the East to be at the head of the entire ecclesiastical hierarchy, and their refusal to acknowledge the apostolic rights in the successors of Peter. As everyone sees, even in this case, the papacy occupies a

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primary position, assumes the principal responsibilities and accepts all consequences, favorable and unfavorable.

To these two characteristic aspects of the history of the papacy of these centuries—both very noteworthy, because the first gave life to Europe, and the second showed a consciousness of its mission and ability to resist every enticement—we must add a third: the almost inevitable burden of the absorbing temporal duties, which ended by engulfing the spiritual authority too extensively in matters extraneous to its scope.

The election of Gregory was unanimous and met with enthusiastic approval. However, the work that awaited the new bishop was delicate and serious. He was well prepared for it, both because of his monastic background and because of his diplomatic apprenticeship as *apocrisiarius*, or permanent ambassador at the imperial court of the East. Cognizant of his political duties, Gregory with much insistence vindicated the rights of his see and defined its powers: "The Roman Church is the head of all the churches. By authority of God, she is above all others. The bishop of Rome is charged with the care and solicitude of all the churches and is called to govern the universal Church. . . . Whoever does not obey the bishop of Rome is separated from the peace of Blessed Peter, because he is the vicar of the prince of the apostles and rules in his stead." His entire activity as pope was based on these words: "Turn your step toward this firm rock on which our Redeemer willed to build the universal Church; away from this mark you will find but obstacles and lose the way."

There is, however, a letter he directed to Bishop Eulogius of Alexandria which seems to contradict what we have just said and sounds quite inconsistent with the traditional doctrine of the supremacy of the pope: "In the inscription of the letter directed to me, the proud title 'universal' was added. I beg your gracious Holiness not to do so again, because in this manner

you take away from yourself that which you add to others beyond due. I do not seek grandeur in words but in good works, nor do I deem an honor for me that which may take honor away from my brothers. My honor is the honor of the universal Church, it is the sound virtue of my brethren; I consider myself truly honored when due honor is not denied each of them. Because, if your Holiness declares me universal Bishop, by this very thing he denies the existence of that very thing for which I alone would be universal. May God protect me! Let us omit words which inflate with pride and offend charity." Due allowance made for the style of that period, one finds in these lines only an admirable example of humility and the explicit intent to eliminate any misunderstandings with his brethren. To refer to a text of undoubted authority, we may say, for example, that the Vatican Council of 1870 re-echoed the words of Gregory when explaining the important truth that along with one supreme and universal pastor, there exists, whole and undiminished, the ordinary and immediate authority of the bishops in their individual dioceses. At worst, the difficulty would reduce itself to the simple refusal to use the term "universal," while the whole attitude of Gregory shows that he vigorously exercised his power over the whole Church and was thoroughly sure of his supreme authority. We have the true answer to this difficulty in another very well known expression used by this same Gregory and included from his time on in the official title of the popes: *servus servorum Dei*—"servant of the servants of God." In this expression, the desire for humility is undoubtedly placed before all else. However, there is also in it a disguised warning to all those who tried to excel without applying the inversion of the evaluating criteria as proposed by Christ. Gregory considered himself truly the first of all in the service

of our Lord and did not wish any other to surpass him in promoting the welfare of the Church.

Pope Gregory extended great care to his Roman flock and to those who, because they lived in Italy, more closely belonged to him, since he was Metropolitan of the Latium region and of all the regions of central and southern Italy, including the islands. It was necessary to offer them religious and material assistance, and he provided them with sermons, processions and other liturgical ceremonies, as well as with regular distributions of food and other subsidies. Regarding this, his biographer, John the Deacon, speaks of "the voluntary cohorts of Roman citizens to whom Gregory, as captain of the celestial militia supplied spiritual weapons." However, immediately after, he adds: "Daily aid was given to the poor and to foreigners, who continued to come to Rome in the number which the conditions of the times permitted." The large incomes from the numerous ecclesiastical patrimonies scattered throughout Italy covered the expenses, as did also the vast holdings of land scrupulously administered by Gregory, who maintained a large correspondence with the various land overseers, giving them advice, prescribing in detail what they should do, and demanding of them the exact amount they were expected to contribute. He also organized in an admirable way the central administrative offices and succeeded in creating an attitude of absolute honesty coupled with efficient administration. Besides the force of his example and his personal and strict control, another contributing factor to his successful administration was the selection of persons from the monastic environment, screened in the course of their training at the Lateran *schola cantorum*, which he transformed into a real training school for the clergy of Rome.

Gregory looked with vigilant concern at the various barbarian kingdoms which had sprung up in many parts of Europe, since little good was to be expected from them. It is not our aim

here to follow in its minor details the development of any political action taken by him, but we must underline the spirit that animated his conduct. This is clearly shown in an official letter directed to the exarch: "The pontiff of the city of Rome sometimes checks the barbarians with warnings and sometimes bends them and controls them with exhortations. Out of reverence for the prince of the apostles, they offer voluntary obedience to papal warnings; and those whom military might fails to put down, the reproach of the pope together with his prayer succeeds in bending." The results which Gregory obtained with the Lombards confirm this, nor is there anyone who could fail to see the outstanding service he indirectly also rendered to Italy—which service is all the more remarkable in that Gregory was fully aware of his national mission and fulfilled it with joy.

With the same zeal for the house of the Lord, Gregory attempted the conversion of entire populations, and at his invitation monks and missionaries went into remotest regions in order to realize the great dream of a new community of peoples around a Christian Rome. Conversion to the new religion for those nations meant becoming part of the civilized world, improving their customs, and exposing themselves to culture and art. Christianity was, in fact, the most suitable element in overcoming racial and social differences, which were deeply rooted at the time. With a happy transposition of the terms, Gregory was called *Consul Dei* for this unifying idea of his by which he retraced the imprint of ancient Rome. As a matter of fact, by this action he greatly broadened the possibilities for good, since he could depend not only on human strength but also on the aid from divine grace. In turn, as the converted peoples became aware of the benefits they were receiving and conscious of the fact that only a religious motive was at the root of so great a zeal, they openly exalted the mission of Christian Rome, recognizing in its head their own spiritual father.

This is not to be construed as an approval on our part of the hypothesis of some scholar who attributes the rise and growth of the medieval power of the papacy to no less a cause than to a special devotion of the barbarian peoples to St. Peter. Haller, in fact, constructed a theory on political reflexes as arising from the cult of the Anglo-Saxons and the Franks for St. Peter; and Gmelin reached the conclusion that it was the *auctoritas Petri*, the "authority of Peter" which reduced the Germans into subjection to Rome—that authority which later became the cornerstone of papal primacy. The fact remains, however, that the memory and the ideals of imperial Rome, together with a veneration for the see of the Vicar of Peter, kept undimmed the enchantment of that city over the barbarians, who felt spiritually conquered by her and were glad to learn from her more civilized forms of life.

3. *The Popes of the Seventh Century*

A few years after the death of Gregory the Great, the Roman See underwent one of the hardest trials in its history. This resulted from the imprudence of its incumbent in the face of one more attempt made by the Greeks to take advantage of the good faith of the Latins. The "case" of Pope Honorius equals and perhaps surpasses those of Liberius and Vigilius, already mentioned. It constitutes a difficult path for those who hold to and defend papal infallibility. Again, we shall relate the facts and then draw the due conclusions.

As usual, the East was divided by various theological dissensions, and each of the sides defended its opinions with ability and obstinacy. The patriarch of Constantinople, Sergius, with the intent of reuniting the heretics to the Church, proposed a new formula of faith which was favorably received and endorsed even by the emperor. Only the future bishop of Jeru-

salem, Sophronius, opposed it obstinately. Sergius turned to Pope Honorius (625–638) with the observation that it was unreasonable to rest the case on the position taken by Sophronius, and urged him to put an end to the dispute on the subject of the will in Christ. Honorius, a pious and zealous man who already had many accomplishments to his credit, allowed himself to be trapped. He addressed two letters to the contenders in which he not only forbade them to speak of operations in Christ but used several unhappy terms which, later, were construed as an approval of the Monothelitic doctrine already condemned by the councils and contrary to orthodoxy. In reality, the context regarding the two natures in Christ was clear since they were described as acting in such a manner that “the divine nature operates the divine, and the human that which is of the flesh, without separation or mixture.” For those in good faith, it was easy to infer that in Christ, as there were two natures, so there must also be two volitive powers. But it is also true that the papal letter contained the following sentence: “We profess one will only in our Lord Jesus Christ”—which statement, in itself, is false. It can be accepted only if understood as indicating that in Christ there existed a moral unity between His human and His divine wills, with the exclusion of any possibility of contradiction between them.

The patriarch, Sergius, took immediate advantage of the unexpected opportunity and prepared a decree in a Monothelitic tone which was approved by Emperor Heraclius with the famous *Ecthesis*, in which sanctions were threatened against the followers of any other opinion. When these documents arrived in Rome, Pope Honorius had already died; but even after his death he was severely censured for the imprudence he had committed in good faith. The sixth ecumenical council launched an anathema against him, confirmed by Pope Leo II and always repeated in the profession of faith read by the

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medieval popes on the day of their coronation. In reality, Honorius was not considered a heretic, but was reproached not only for not having eliminated an error in its inception, as was his duty, but even more for having favored its development through negligence and shortsightedness. Such severity shows the vigilant consciousness of the popes in the fulfillment of their duty as custodians and teachers of Christian truth.

Still, the immediate successors of Honorius showed great firmness and gave numerous proofs of the authority of the Roman Church even in the East. But they met with bitter reactions because, in Constantinople, clergy and court were becoming always more intolerant. It was Pope Martin I (649-655) who felt the effects of their opposition. Following the condemnation in a Lateran Council of the Monothelitic theories and the sending of its notice to all the churches, the exarch Theodore Calliopas was dispatched to Rome to capture the pope and bring him to the East. Much violence ensued. The trip itself was a Calvary for the sick pope, who was held in prison for many months. The trial was a mockery and ended in the death sentence for the pontiff after removal from his episcopal office. The penalty was then commuted to exile, and Martin died a short time later, considered a saint. Episodes of this kind contributed to widen the cleavage between East and West and to make any conciliation almost impossible. In spite of this, the papacy was increasingly becoming a center of attraction to all men of good will and those not blinded by passions or enthralled by petty interests.

Thus, while the Greeks persisted in a monotonous see-saw of violence and attempted conciliation, in Rome three trends appeared which deserve to be underscored. First, heads of barbarian kingdoms frequently came to Rome to receive baptism from the pope's own hands or to renounce worldly honors and enter a monastery. F. Gregorovius recognized that such events

foreshadowed the future political submission of western Europe to the spiritual power of the Vicar of Peter. Secondly, the citizens of Rome and of nearby regions, reacting to the vexations of Byzantine officials, looked upon their bishop as their natural protector; and this view gradually led them to feel as if the pope possessed authority even in temporal matters. By a certain time the popes intervened as intermediaries between governing authorities and their subjects in behalf of the latter. But this state of affairs necessarily called for a different arrangement with regard to the relations between Rome and Byzantium—a thing which should have been possible had the general political conditions permitted the two powers to assume more natural positions. Thirdly, Rome continued her function as the powerhouse of the faith, sending forth missionaries or approving missionary endeavors which were arising spontaneously in various regions of Europe. Because of its particular importance, we shall mention the evangelization of the Frisians by the monk Willibrord. He was consecrated bishop by Pope Sergius I and was given relics of apostles and martyrs to be placed in the churches he was going to build. Worthy of particular mention is also the evangelization of the Germans by Boniface. He was consecrated bishop by Gregory II and was taken into "the friendship and communion of the Holy Father and of the entire Apostolic See." In his letter of reply to the project submitted by Boniface, the pope charged him to carry out his mission according to the doctrine and the discipline of Rome.

4. The Papal State and Ecclesiastical Offices

The year 715 marks an important date in Western history and in the Catholic Church. After an uninterrupted sequence of seven popes of Eastern origin, a Roman, Gregory, was selected;

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and from that moment the prevalence of local elements was definitely sanctioned. Around the same time, an energetic king, Liutprand (712), ascended the throne of the Lombards; and to the Byzantine imperial throne ascended an obstinate heretic, Leo the Isaurian, enemy of sacred images. Thus, the various protagonists were prepared for the final showdown; once more Rome was in the center of the struggle.

However, for the history of the papacy the long struggle against the invading expansion of the Lombards was no less important than the request for help directed to the Franks, with the consequences that followed. In fact, at the conclusion of the long period of relations between the popes and the barbarians, a pope was seen to dispose of thrones and extend to the political field the exercise of the power of binding and loosing which Christ had conferred upon Peter in the religious field. With this grave precedent, a road was opening to the most unsuspected developments. This action indicated clearly that a new historical period was starting in which religion was the beginning and the end of every human activity, and in which the pontiffs were the judges of individual behavior as well as of the conduct of the representatives of civil power.

Gregory II was the first who dared to react openly to the Byzantine impositions, making himself, at the same time, the authoritative interpreter of the spiritual and economic interests of the Italian Peninsula. However, he had to reckon with Liutprand, King of the Lombards, from whom he nevertheless received as a gift the town of Sutri and other territories. But this was, in reality, more a matter of patrimonial concessions than a recognition of sovereign powers. If it is improper to consider the action of the king as the cause that gave rise to the Papal State, it is unquestionable that the repetition of such donations in the following years; culminating in the entrance

into the domain of public law, the power of the papacy came to be extended to the strictly political field.

One of the most inveterate prejudices among historians is that the popes were guilty of having prevented for centuries the unification of Italy; and that, while they hindered a Lombard conquest toward the South, they also erected, with the constitution of the Papal State, a dividing wall between the two halves of the Peninsula. If true, this grave charge would definitely obscure the many merits of the papacy as regards Italian civilization. However, insofar as papal opposition to the Lombards is concerned, we must say immediately that there was no possibility of coexistence between them and the Italians, and that all the inhabitants of Rome and of other cities were horrified even at the thought of becoming subjects of those barbarians. The popes therefore made themselves champions of a public sentiment; and if their action saved the Church from being subjugated, nobody could blame them for this, since it also saved a secular tradition, a way of life and a glory which were essentially Roman and which gave rise to the future Italian national life. In this, they were, as they continued to be in the following centuries, the well-qualified guardians of Italy, solidifying around the Church of Rome all the best energies and the most vital forces of the race.

Meanwhile, papal prestige grew even more during the middle of the eighth century, thanks to the decisive role exercised by Popes Zachary (741–752) and Stephen II (752–757) in changing the dynasty in Gaul. In this region, the ecclesiastical politics of the sovereigns had developed under the shield of the Roman Church and under the influence of the *missus S. Petri*. In other words, a complex web of relations had built up, by which the Apostolic See had secured control over all the activities of the kingdom. Actually, those relations with Rome saved the French Church from becoming subservient to the

throne, because the popes resisted the frequently arbitrary kings and so bound the hierarchy to themselves that they became one of the most important organs of the Church. The request by the powerful master of the palace, Pepin, regarding the transfer of the crown was not, therefore, a novelty, but the consequence of a situation that had existed for centuries, although it was also a skillful move directed at making his rise to power appear to be according to law by presenting it as based on divine grace and on the consent of the highest earthly interpreter of the divine will. In fact, to be king *Dei gratia* or *iuvante nos Domino*, "by God's grace" or "by the help of the Lord," meant much more than the general recognition of the fact that every authority comes from God. It meant that power was considered as a mission and was meant to be used for the glory of God. In turn, Pope Zachary, inviting, *per apostolicam auctoritatem*, "by apostolic authority," the clergy and the nobles to elevate Pepin to the throne, was assured of the support of a powerful ally and had set up very favorable conditions for future requests.

The occasion was not long in presenting itself, since the Lombards, under the leadership of King Aistulf, once more were gravely threatening Rome and the surrounding Church patrimonies. At this point we shall not enumerate the long series of discussions, the frequent trips to the other side of the Alps, the unstable peace and the often-renewed assaults. We shall explain, instead, the significance of the letters sent from Rome to France against the "very nefarious Lombards, sons of the devil," bearing the signature of the Apostle himself. Whoever thought them a childish expedient contrived to impress the credulous Carolingian kings failed to realize that, even then, no one really believed that St. Peter was actually writing letters. But they were documents, rich with symbolic value, in that they expressed the concept that between the first pope and his succes-

sors there was a continuity, even a oneness, inasmuch as it was one and the same person that continued to live and act in his own see, defending Christian interests, righting offended justice, and protecting those who had been entrusted in a particular way to the bishop of Rome.

At this point, a word of explanation seems necessary with regards to the term "restitution" used in those acts. In reality, since the property never had belonged to the popes, there was no question of returning anything. Therefore, juridically speaking, it was absurd to refer to institutions or persons in whose favor the secessions had been made. However, taking the principle that God is the true *dominus* or Lord, and that the Son of God had given Peter charge over His sheep, the *restituere* and *reddere* were fully justified. Obviously, we are before a logical and legitimate application of a fundamental principle in the history of the papacy.

After a few years, thanks to a successful turn of events, a new *respublica Romanorum* arose, headed by the pope, although his judicial title remained always uncertain, as he was less sovereign of a territory than Vicar of Peter and head of the *ecclesia Dei*, of "God's Church." By necessity, the religious authority of the pope always prevailed over the political, since, to omit any other consideration, a dynastic continuity that would give stability to the government of the territorial state was lacking. However, it was exactly that universal and typically Roman position which saved the city from the danger of enclosing itself within a restricted circle of local ideals and interests.

Having founded the Papal State (or *terra sancti Petri*—"land of St. Peter," because, as stated above, the Apostle was considered the owner of all patrimonial properties donated to his successors), it was necessary to endow it with a stable organization in order to render the administration more efficient and protect the possessions. We shall now consider the members of

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the papal bureaucracy and extend our analysis to all the offices of the Curia, the various Roman ecclesiastical officeholders, and the career of a future candidate to the highest office in the priesthood. The *venerabilis clerus*, the clergy, comprised, first of all, the great mass of those who had minor orders, then the class of *sacerdotes* (bishops and priests), of deacons and *primates ecclesiae* (primates of the Church) who occupied the highest posts. Many of these were honorary dignities and had been created only in imitation of the Byzantine court. However, the main posts were held by the *iudices*, that is, the *vicedominus*, who took care of the Lateran *episcopium* (episcopal house); and the *cubicularii* and the *consiliarii*, who enjoyed the personal trust of the pope. In charge of the money was the *arcarius*, who entered in a large register all the incomes and disbursements while another entered the names of those who received subsidies (over 3,000). In time, there appeared other functionaries such as the *saccellarius*, the *nomenclator*, the *vestiarius*. Below them, were the *scriniarii* and the *hostiarii*, the notaries who enjoyed much importance because, besides drawing up and keeping the acts, they were entrusted with special administrative and diplomatic missions. The notaries were organized in a *schola* which, headed by a *primicerius*, reached down to the minor orders.

The apostolic chancery was defined as "the providential instrument" that helped preserve the authority of the Holy See even in periods of darkness and of moral decadence. Through the formularies, the authentication of the acts, and such means, the papal prestige was preserved and the respect of the people for the institution was enhanced even when a particular pope was, in some respects, wanting. Visiting Rome one could possibly have been adversely impressed. But whoever received a papal letter, so solemn and sober, would always be greatly impressed by the traditional consciousness of the mission entrusted to the successor of Peter. A large part of the success was due to

the administrative machinery that continued to function with regularity.

Even the material assistance given by the Roman Church was wisely organized. Its function rested upon the concept of permanent centers (deaconries) distributed in various sections of the city and consisting of monastic communities entrusted with the service, or *ministerium*, of charity (hospitals, shelter for pilgrims, distribution of food, and so forth). In the eighth century, there were eight such centers situated in buildings which had already been devoted to public use during the imperial era. Outside the city, instead, there were the *domuscultae*, well-established agricultural farms which supplied for current needs, wood for the construction of churches and such things.

A special mention must be made of the cardinals, or clerics to whom a church was entrusted (to "incardinate" an individual in a church meant to render him irremovable). This was not a peculiarity belonging exclusively to Rome, but it was only in Rome that such clerics acquired so noteworthy a prestige and importance that regulations became necessary as to the use of the title and the number of them. In the eleventh century, the cardinals formed a college, without specific duties, but destined to become the seed-bed of future popes. In this cardinalitial corps were seven suburban bishops, twenty-five priests in charge of the *tituli* or important churches other than major basilicas, and seven deacons. Of course, in time, even non-Romans were called to the cardinalship since the duties of the office involved activities of a more general nature than being concerned with their titular churches.

In order to be eligible for the papal post, young men had to undergo a long period of preparation. This was obtained at the Lateran *patriarchium*, which was the seat of the government of the Church and the regular home of the pontiffs. At the com-

pletion of their regular studies in the *schola cantorum*, and sometimes even without their attending this school, the pope personally selected the best candidates, who then were gathered in the *cubiculum* and, after a very special preparation, were introduced to the various steps leading to ecclesiastical offices. The cardinals were usually members of the best Roman families and therefore in a favorable position to be well known, aside from their personal talents for oratory or the conduct of affairs, for their donations, construction of churches, and the like. Many partisan intrigues were built around them and at every new election the spectacle of very lively struggles was renewed.

In 769, a Lateran council, after dealing strongly with the "invaders of the Apostolic See" introduced new regulations regarding papal elections, taking away from the laity any direct interference in the selection of a candidate from the restricted circle of those in high offices and the papal court. The decree stated, in fact, that the matter should be decided in a preliminary meeting and that, only when agreement was reached among the few participants, would they proceed to the other phases of the rite—the acclamation, the coronation, the "acceptance" by the citizens, the taking of possession of the property of the Church, and so forth. In time, things were changed and more importance was given to the lay element, as is clear from the constitution of 824 and, above all, from the events of the ninth and tenth centuries and the beginning of the eleventh.

The coronation ceremony was very elaborate. It comprised the *deductio* of the new pope to the Lateran, in the midst of chants and hosannas, the parade of the various orders of citizens in front of the newly elected pope, who was seated in the papal chair, the kissing of the foot, and the taking of the minutes. The consecration, on the other hand, was held in St. Peter's at the hands of the Bishop of Ostia, and this also was carried out according to a detailed *ordo* stabilized for centuries, and capable

of meeting not only the requirements of a sacred function but also the desire for great pomp and the ambitious sentiment of the local element steeped in the imperishable grandeur of Rome. Among the distinctive vestments of the pope, the *camelaucum* should be mentioned. This was a small conical cap changed to a double crown at the time of Boniface VIII, and permanently fixed in the form of a triple crown in the period of Urban V.

5. *The European Christian Community*

The renewal of the imperial title in the West—conferred in St. Peter's by Pope Leo III (795–816) on Charles, King of the Franks, who was in good stead with the Church for his conquests and his civil and cultural reorganization of Europe—was another papal victory. Whatever the intentions of the individual protagonists and the political results of this act, what most impressed the contemporaries as well as later generations was that a king had been seen on his knees before the pope. Moreover, the main duty of the emperor was that of being a missionary of the faith, the armed hand of Christianity and the protector of the churches. This meant that the new institution had a strictly sacred character, confirmed also by the anointing of the candidate and by his (relative) introduction into the ecclesiastical hierarchy.

The anxious medieval aspiration to unity—that is, the *ordinatio ad unum* proper to the entire life of an era which subordinated every other matter to religion—had its highest manifestation in the renewal of the empire. Thus, there would now be peace in the world, for there is one ready to defend it and enforce it. This gave politics a very high moral standing. But since the exercise of power was considered almost a religious duty, it was natural to expect that the leader of religion should

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lay down regulations, draw up directives, call down and punish those who did not make good use of the great privilege accorded them. In other words, the pope had become the supreme judge and the ultimate interpreter, even in the political field. It was a great moral victory for the pope to have control over the imperial crown centered in Rome, where, not many centuries before, Catholic bishops had been persecuted by their pagan sovereigns.

However, it was a very costly victory, because, with the death of the first ruler of the renewed empire, his successors were largely incapable and unworthy, and the popes found themselves enmeshed in the intrigues of the Roman aristocracy. To make things worse, there came an unexpected threat from the Saracens, who were infesting the Mediterranean and threatening Rome itself. The danger became extreme when, in an incursion, those pirates took away the golden altar of the Confession in the Vatican Basilica and tore the silver plates off the doors of the church. It was Leo IV (847–855) who rekindled hope in all the citizens and infused in them new enthusiasm. Following the celebration of the Mass at Ostia and the blessing of the troops, a battle took place in which the military forces from various small Italian states were seen united in a generous effort to defend their land and protect the entire European civilization. The victory which they gained was one of the most glorious pages of the "reconquest" and was due to papal initiative. Immediately after, Leo assembled the Romans in parliament, and a decree was passed to restore the walls and the gates of the city and to construct a fortified wall around St. Peter's. Contributions were collected and the work was begun under the personal supervision of the pope. Upon termination of the work, Leo walked with bare feet around the construction, reciting the prayers prescribed by the appropriate ritual. In view

of its deep significance at least one of the inscriptions placed on the walls deserves to be mentioned:

Rome, capital, splendor and hope of the world, golden Rome,
As beholds a sweet mother, the toil of thy Bishop shows.*

Almost equally outstanding was John VIII (872–882), who did a great deal for the protection of St. Paul's and organized military expeditions against the Mussulmans. We cannot omit mentioning Nicholas I (858–867), a truly outstanding man whose great natural gifts of discipline, moderation and justice were surpassed only by his charity. He made of the papacy the center of social harmony because he considered it his duty to maintain peace, and he did not hesitate to excommunicate rebel sovereigns or ecclesiastics who were unwilling to recognize the primacy of Rome, as in the case of Photius, the patriarch of Constantinople.

However, from the end of the ninth century, even the glory of the papacy suffered the effects of a general process of deterioration of society and of those institutions having a universal character. We have already stated that the Frankish emperors did not fulfill their duties. Thus, we should not be surprised if there were times when the same imperial throne remained long vacant. Even culture retrogressed, and it seemed that only force and violence took the place of free choice and vulgar instincts seemed to dominate unchecked. Naturally, the papacy experienced the consequences of this state of things, many of its incumbents were unworthy and bloody men un-

* These are the last two lines of a ten-line inscription placed over St. Peregrine's Gate (Porta Viridaria), which in Latin read as follows:

*Roma, caput orbis, splendor, spes, aurea Roma,
Praesulis ut monstrat en labor alma tui.*

The entire inscription is reported in Duchesne's edition of *Liber Pontificalis* (Duchesne, *Liber Pontificalis*, Paris, 1892, pag. 138), as also the inscriptions over the other two gates, whose texts Duchesne obtained from De Rossi's *Inscriptiones Christianae*, t. II, pages 324–326).—Translator's note.

lawfully seated by various factions. Several painful episodes show the low state into which the See of Peter fell—such as the violent suppression of John VIII; the trial ordered by Sergius III of the corpse of his predecessor, Formosus; the accession to the papacy of an immoral person, John XII; the buying and the selling of the title between Benedict IX and Gregory VI. Still, once one has overcome the first feeling of disgust and the natural resentment of offended moral conscience, one must try to evaluate the peculiar historical situations in order to be able to understand the motivating factors affecting the behavior of such tragic persons.

Moreover, it is necessary to dispose of many legends and untruths, invented in good or bad faith by historians, in order to free ourselves from a historiographical tradition of many centuries which has unanimously judged that period as a bad one. (The "iron age," the triumph of pornocracy, and so forth, are such concepts.) In truth, none of these popes acted against the doctrine entrusted to their custody; nor did any of them sanction immorality, such as approval of divorce among sovereigns, and the like. Insofar as the difficulties of communications allowed, all maintained contacts with distant churches. From existing records, we see that nine hundred papal acts of this kind belong to the period from 888 to 1054, the worst and blackest of all. Several of these popes did not enjoy political importance and were guided in their politics by laymen such as Alberic II, the Crescentii and the Tuscolani; yet they worked with zeal, fostering religious ideas among the people, promoting monastic reforms, and beautifying the churches of Rome. In short, maintaining the objective point of view we proposed to follow from the beginning, we can conclude with regard to this delicate and controversial period of papal history that, in spite of the personal weaknesses of its rulers, the Roman Church remained the Church of Peter. It must be admitted,

therefore, that over and above human caprices and passions something permanent remained—namely, the continuity of an idea and a spiritual sense auguring well for the future and preparing favorable conditions for revival. In fact, the various curial institutions continued to function. Alive as always was the devotion to the Apostle, whose tomb was proof and guarantee of the primacy and the perpetuity of the Church which rested upon it; and from all parts of the world pilgrims continued to converge on Rome, and clerics too kept coming with petitions for privileges and recognition. It is possible that other sees may have had as their heads men less immoral or more educated, but none of them could claim the prerogatives of the See of Rome, as a variety of testimonies of Doctors and other famous ecclesiastical writers found also in this period well testify. In substance, these repeated the concept that whatever Rome says is the truth, that the way of preserving the purity of faith is by remaining united with Rome, and that in doctrinal matters no other authority has the power of making final decision except the Apostolic See, because it alone is an institution of divine origin.

The first attempts at changing the existing situation in Rome, in which the aristocratic element dominated over the ecclesiastical, were made by the German sovereigns of the House of Saxony, who in the latter part of the tenth century snatched papal nominations from local influence. It is clear that popes selected by imperial designation would be closely bound to the political interests of the various emperors. However, it cannot be said that they fell into a state of servility, for owing to a providential consciousness of their responsibilities, the various popes were able to navigate well between reefs, keeping their dignity unsullied and intact. Later, their successors slowly regained their full liberty and broke the ties. Grammarians and men of letters ascended the throne of Peter and raised the moral

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and cultural levels in the curia. Even the territorial patrimony of the Church was restored, not for purely temporal ends, but out of a conviction that a temporal basis would allow greater spiritual independence. It was Benedict VIII (1012–1024) who first realized that political prestige could be a contributing factor in the application of spiritual authority. Hence, he is properly credited with heading the list of the successive and more illustrious pope-reformers. He re-established the Papal State and, through his diplomatic efforts and his somewhat militaristic methods, he reformed and placed at the service of the Holy See a good administrative machinery.

Besides, the foundation of the Abbey of Cluny, in Burgundy, in 910, brought in time a valuable aid to the papacy. In fact, the monastery was free from all civil and ecclesiastical authority, except that of the Roman Church, to which, as a symbolic tribute, the monastery offered annually ten *solidi*. Much more valuable still was the contribution given by serious-minded, active, enthusiastic and disciplined men who took in hand the reform of the Church and brought it to a successful end with the aid of powerful people and in spite of many difficulties.

Finally, another event had to take place before the Roman Catholic Church could assume in full the leadership of Western European civilization. It was the painful but inevitable separation from Byzantium. With the passing of centuries, the misunderstandings between the two parts of Christianity became always more pronounced, because of a reciprocal ignorance of language, differences in the rites, and rivalries between the leaders. In the space of five hundred and thirty years, between the Council of Nicaea and the rebellion of Photius, the Greek Church had remained for more than two hundred years apart from Rome, that is, in a state of schism. Thus, when the true and proper schism did come, no one thought that something irreparable was taking place. On the other hand, attempts

at reconciliation were made more than once, but to no avail. They were like efforts made to revive a corpse. With regard to the alleged motive for the break, we may point out that by refusing to recognize papal primacy, the Greeks went directly against their own tradition. In fact, in various ecumenical councils (Ephesus, Chalcedon), whose decisions they had accepted, explicit declarations were made in favor of the primacy. The contradiction was evident. But, when passions are unleashed, the power of judgment is distorted, and the proper evaluation of oncoming problems becomes very difficult.

1. The Glories of the Pontifical Power

We owe it to modern historiography if the importance of the so-called "Gregorian reform" in the religious and political history of the Middle Ages has finally been placed in its proper perspective. Previously, much emphasis was laid on the struggle over investitures, the controversy between Church and State regarding the freedom of episcopal elections and the concession of feudal benefices to the clergy. This, of course, had kept in the background the most characteristic and noble aspect of a vast movement which was to end in the mingling of the religious and the civil ideals at the height of the Middle Ages, and the breaking up of that intermingling between the clerical and lay state which followed upon the disastrous conditions of Europe around the year 1000.

2. The Gregorian Reform

It was on the initiative of a small group of men, gathered around Hildebrand of Soana, who later became Pope Gregory VII, that there was undertaken and carried almost to comple-

tion the heroic feat of turning the tide of an absolute state of complacency, of breaking up interested alliances by recalling ecclesiastics to the dignity of their mission, and defining for political authorities the limits of their competence. It was thanks to the profound consciousness of their mission and the genuine purity of their intentions that the "Gregorian reformers" were able to overcome misunderstandings and difficulties. But the effects of their action were so vast and of such decisive importance as to surpass the protagonists' fondest anticipations. In fact, these men must be credited with laying the beginnings of a new European society, with initiating the development of social forces, with bringing to flower a new form of spirituality, and an ecclesiastical organization based on principles that were a distinct departure from the traditional ones. Since the latter point interests us more directly, we shall dwell upon it at length so as to evaluate its significance in the history of the development of the papal concept and of the progressive centralization of government in the Catholic Church.

The first decisive step on the way to reform consisted in having the choice of the candidate for the papal chair made by the emperor rather than by the adherents of the local Roman nobility. In such a way, intrigues, disagreements and violence, which had plagued the pontifical elections in the preceding centuries, were eliminated. Furthermore, pious, learned and zealous persons, coming almost always from the monasteries and in the forefront in the struggle for reform, could receive more consideration. This decision was taken at a council held at Sutri in 1046 following the removal of three popes who had claimed the chair at the same time. The Roman people, giving the emperor the patrician office of "first citizen of Rome," gave him also the right of a *primatus in electione*, primacy in election enabling him to act as he pleased. After several secondary figures, Leo IX (1049-1054) was elected to the pontifical

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throne, and, from then on, the pontiffs and their immediate collaborators assumed the leadership in the struggle for ecclesiastical liberty and gained major increases. Led by the very logic of things, the men chosen by Emperor Henry felt the precariousness of their position and also the necessity to proceed further on the road of ecclesiastical independence. Thus, the second step was marked by decrees issued by a very important synod held in Rome in April, 1059, under the pontificate of Nicholas II, in which new regulations were established with regard to papal elections. The third phase, however, was represented by the firm stand taken by Gregory VII before Emperor Henry IV. As to the papal elections, it was decided that all power be concentrated in the hands of the Cardinal-bishops of the suburbicarian sees, and the titulars of the city churches, with the first group possessing the right to designate the candidate, and the second group together with the first possessing the right to elect him, while to the laity and to the lower clergy was reserved only the right to assent after the selection had already been made.

The council also established that the candidate be taken preferably from the Roman clergy and that the ceremony be performed whenever possible in Rome. The council paid the "due honor" and the usual *reverentia* to the emperor, but no one was deceived by such declarations. On the contrary, it became clear that with these new provisions the traditional system of papal election had been definitely eliminated. For, from that moment, the decision was in the hands of a restricted ecclesiastical oligarchy henceforth acting outside any local or foreign influence, Roman or German. In its general lines, the same system is still in force today.

After the death of Alexander II, the successor of Nicholas II (1061), Hildebrand, the soul of the entire reform movement, became pope. No one more than he felt the very high dignity of

that post, the responsibilities connected with it and the urgency of forging the instruments needed for an efficient functioning of the Roman curia. For twelve years (1073–1085) he fought with indomitable energy and diplomatic ability; and, if he did not fully succeed, he at least launched his program and steered it toward a definite victory. Unfortunately, he was unwittingly laying at the same time the premises for the future deviations from the very high ideal to which he had aimed with absolute dedication.

From the writings of Gregory VII (the *Registrum*), it appears that the pontiff strongly defended the primacy of Peter, and that he had an unshakable faith in the salutary mission of the Church and of the clergy. In view of the supramundane destiny of mankind, the priests must care for everything. They must have the responsibility for everything, and their intervention, *certis inspectis causis*, is not only lawful but necessary and beneficent. Gregory's refrain was: "If, by a divine mandate, the priest judges spiritual things, how can he allow temporal things to be withdrawn from his competence?" And it was in view of this criterion that the pope tried to form a community of nations in Europe with the Roman pontiff as the organ of the supreme moral magisterium and the best guarantee of *iustitia* and of *caritas*, of justice and charity. Gregory bound several peoples to himself only through a superior finality and in the interest of the nations themselves, which were thus able to achieve their *libertas*, molding their various aspirations in a harmonious unity under the secure guidance of the successor of Peter. We need not speak of the famous *Dictatus papae*, because it has been demonstrated that this was not a program of theocracy, but merely the index of a canonical collection gathered by Hildebrand in support of the primacy of the Roman Church. Therefore, its brief and incisive sentences have a significance

quite different from that which, at one time, was attributed to them.

However, the pontiff's good plans would have been worthless had he not created the means indispensable to the efficient exercise of his power. To accomplish this, Gregory VII utilized these three factors above all: the councils of bishops held in Rome, the papal legates sent everywhere, and a collection of canonical laws gathered to justify his affirmations.

Since the fourth century, it had been the custom of the popes to convene synods of Italian bishops, consecrated by the pontiff and some Roman prelates, in order to examine the most serious matters falling under the jurisdiction of the pope. The anniversary of the election of the reigning pope was generally the date chosen for the synods. With Leo IX, this practice developed, and the number of participants grew to include all those who were outstanding for zealotness in bringing about the reform. Thus, while on one side the good bishops were rewarded, on the other the deliberations of the synods acquired greater importance. Such councils, however, were not yet ecumenical, and only in 1123 was the first ecumenical council held at the Lateran, under Callistus II (1119-1124). Papal control over nearby bishops had existed ever since the end of the fourth century, as noted above. However, Gregory VII reorganized it more systematically, instituting two types of legates: those *in loco*, who received the permanent task from the pope to survey the progress of the reform in a given territory, and those sent directly from Rome to carry out well-defined assignments. All were given detailed instructions and all were to report minutely to the pope. Since the legates represented directly the person of the pope, they were able to give orders to the bishops and preside over councils even though they were simple monks. Those who felt the restrictive effects of such provisions were the metropolitans, because their rights

(examination of episcopal elections, handling of causes, and so on) were thus transferred to Rome and to her legates. It is true, however, that some bishops preferred to establish direct contact with the center of Catholicism rather than work through their immediate superiors, with whom they were frequently at odds.

In order to justify his conduct, Gregory VII encouraged the compilation of a new canonical collection, since his adversaries appealed to traditional practices and invoked the authority of certain texts in support of their attitude. Gregory wanted to show that he had no revolutionary intent and that he was vindicating rights which actually belonged to him. Until then, such collections had been of two kinds: either they presented the documents in a chronological order, and therefore it was difficult to find the topics desired; or they followed a methodical plan, such as the renowned *Decretum* of Burchard of Worms. But in these the pontiff's place was not emphasized. At Gregory's initiative, many researchers went to work in order to discover in libraries the oldest testimonies, decretals, fragments from the fathers and also the collections of Roman Law. Thus began to appear the first compilations, like those of Atto, of Anselm of Lucca, and of Deusdedit. In all these the main concern appears to be the elimination of proofs in favor of a purely local discipline and the laying down of these principles: that papal authority itself is the source of law, and that a text has value only insofar as it has at least the silent approval of the pope.

The new collections were destined to go a long way. (It is well known that at the end of the eleventh century, Ivo of Chartres and Bernold of Constance introduced more careful criteria of criticism and that in the middle of the twelfth century the monk Gratian with his *Concordia discordantium canonum* laid the basis of the future *Corpus iuris canonici*

promulgated by Gregory IX and extended gradually by the succeeding popes.) All the collections of Gregory were entitled *De primatu papae*, and all held to the prevailing concept that the pontifical will was the source of law.

We cannot fail to mention the long conflict in which Gregory VII was engaged with the emperor Henry IV. In fact, even in this there appears a clear consciousness of the powers and rights which the pope considered as connected with the office. Equally evident are the motives of Gregory's political action. His was no thirst for power, nor ambition for command, nor desire to humble the adversary, but a rigid sense of duty and of the indisputable priority of religious ends. In conclusion we may say that, even when facing sovereigns, Gregory VII is exclusively a pope, the head of a society in which spiritual interests prevail above all others, the pastor of souls whose main concern is the hereafter, which impels him to rule almost sternly over every human activity and institution. His contemporaries accepted that verdict, thus proving that it was no absurd claim. However, reactions were not lacking; and the penance of Henry at Canossa was in itself perhaps more an astute move, which took the initiative out of the hands of the pope, than a sign of humility, as it is generally represented. Nevertheless, the principle of *rex iustus et fidelis*—that is, the principle of the subjection of kings, *ratione peccati*, to an authority that cannot err and cannot be judged by anyone—remained unshaken.

3. *The Popes as Leaders of Medieval Civilization*

For a long time the successors of Gregory VII followed the way traced by this great pope, consolidating the work of concentration of ecclesiastical power in the hands of the popes, and bringing new elements in defense of their rights. In regard to the first point, we shall mention the progressive withdrawal

from the bishops of the faculty to grant dispensations, in contrast with the preceding regulations which left the bishops free to deal with their subjects as they thought best. Now, instead, since the popes had a universal right over all human laws and enjoyed the exclusive power to interpret legislations enacted by their predecessors and the great councils of the Church, jurists were not only discussing whether such competence belonged to the bishops but they even affirmed that the popes could intervene to dispense from observing episcopal decisions, even *nolente episcopo*, against the will of the bishop. The principle having been stated that canon law rested totally on the will of the pope, it followed that the pope, as possessor of a supreme power, could freely make laws restricting at will even episcopal powers if he thought it was for the good of the Church. In two fields, above all, such regulations applied: in the canonization of saints, which Alexander III reserved to the Holy See, to stem the tide of uncontrolled local cults that had flourished in the preceding centuries; and in the granting of indulgences, which later culminated in the great gift of the Jubilee, offered by Boniface VIII, a departure from all previous customs. Furthermore, in order to better defend the purity of the faith from heretical infiltrations which in the twelfth and the thirteenth centuries had become increasingly rampant, the Holy See reserved to herself the procedure relative to inquisition and other trials, thus relieving the bishops of a taxing burden and of a very delicate task. This, however, meant also a reduction of their powers in such matters. In the discharge of the inquisitorial duties, the popes could count instead on the new mendicant orders, which were at the complete service of the pope and dedicated themselves with zeal to any task.

A very significant change was that undergone by a term which from that moment on became one of the prerogatives of the popes—the title *vicarius Christi*, Vicar of Christ. It will be

remembered that we had said that at a certain time the popes, to justify their position with regard to other bishops, had made extensive use of the expression *vicarius Petri*, Vicar of Peter. As to the title *vicarius Christi*, it was not attributed to them as popes, since it was common to all bishops and even to sovereigns, who similarly were invested with a religious mission. In the post-Gregorian period, however, while the use of the expression *vicarius Petri* was maintained, the expression *vicarius Christi* became more prevalent but was limited to the popes, according to the ecclesiological doctrine of the period, which in its theological principles specified the eminence of their position and the reasons for it. Since the word "vicar" derived from juridical terminology and in particular from canon law, it is easy to see that the coincidental emergence of canonical science and the reaffirmation of the doctrine of the primacy, was not a fortuitous matter, because it was based on the use of a title possessing definite juridical overtones.

Among the authors who contributed most to the spreading of that notion must be mentioned St. Bernard of Clairvaux. It was precisely when his disciple, Eugene III (1145-1153), was elevated to the Chair of Peter, that the papal chancery began to use the phrase *vicarius Christi* with all its solemn and characteristic significance. However, it was only Innocent III who drew from the phrase all the doctrinal value contained in it. Before speaking of him and of his decisive contributions to the history of the Roman primacy, it is necessary to dwell further upon the vicissitudes of the twelfth century. These represented a valuable element in the growth of papal prestige and power.

The struggle over investitures ended, at least officially, with the Concordat of Worms in 1122, concluded between Pope Callistus II and Henry V. The Lateran Council of the following

year was a solemn manifestation of the renewed authority of the bishops of Rome and their great possibilities for independent action. But not even at this time was the forward march made easy for the papacy. The new religious-political trend had caused within the Church itself differences of opinion and dissensions on the policies to be followed. Proof of this was the schisms which developed in the course of the twelfth century, besides the election of various antipopes even after the time of Gregory VII. However, the religious import of such movements was nil, for it was clear that they were set up to promote the political interests of the Empire. The schism of 1130, however, is of great importance, since it was the result of two currents in the curia itself and the two claimants (Innocent II and Anacletus II, who resisted for nine years) were the candidates of two groups of cardinals, the new and the old, the foreigners and the Romans. One of the effects of the Gregorian reform was the detaching of the curia from the city of Rome, thus eliminating the influence of local elements, making a greater place for the monastic influence and, despite the apparent contradiction, increasing the number of financial transactions by the pontifical entourage. Even the staff of the papal chancery was separated from that of the city of Rome so that even the type of writing changed. For these reasons, from now on, the term "Roman" must be taken in a sense quite different from that current in the period between Gregory the Great and the year 1000.

The second schism—first between Alexander III and Victor IV, and later between Pascal and Callistus III, between 1159 and 1177—was a definite proof of the bankruptcy of imperial politics. The Holy See resisted all attacks and, although it had the empire against it, it found support in almost all the other European states. Moreover, in the Lateran Council of 1179, which sanctioned the papal victory, the instruments were forged

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with which to face any kind of opposition which might arise in the future. In the new dispositions for the conclave, not even a slight reference was made to the possibility of lay intervention in the pontifical elections and the assent of two-thirds of those present was set as a requirement for the validity of the choice of the titular. The council was presided over by Alexander, who, when still a jurist under the name of Rolando Bandinelli, had urged all the members of the flock of Christ to submit *Petri magisterio et doctrinae*, "to the teaching power and doctrine of Peter," and to appeal to the pope "as to a father and a teacher" in all questions concerning faith. In his opposition to Frederick Barbarossa, the pope had the support of the Italian communes, which, in the oath of the Lombard League, had pledged "to save the dignity of the Roman Church" and to defend "the honor and the liberty of Italy."

Beyond the individual episodes, it appears very clear in the European history of the eleventh and the twelfth centuries that the direction of all social and cultural life was in the hands of the popes. They promoted or at least proclaimed the crusades, calling the people to unite under the sign of the cross and urging them to make every personal sacrifice for the success of these religious ventures. They defended the rights of the people and protected public and private liberty, without ignoring the sacred character of sovereignty, through curbing abuses freely indulged in by the majority of holders of royal and imperial offices. They promoted work of pacification, suggesting the truce of God and christianizing chivalry. They encouraged the care of the poor, established hospitals and hospices, and prohibited usury and illegitimate speculation. They instituted universities and spread education by every means. They also promoted artistic activities of all types, in Rome and elsewhere, favored as they were by large financial possibilities and by their many contacts with the most distant centers. In short, after the

year 1000 the popes were the soul of civilization; and even Gregorovius, certainly a surprising source, had to recognize honestly that "history possesses no terms sufficiently great to indicate even approximately the universal influence, the great creative works and the immortal glory of the popes. On the horizon of civilization, they constitute a dynasty next to whose light those of kings become dim."

Will anyone be surprised then if, as a consequence of such supremacy, some theoretician of papal power may have advanced too many claims and attempted to vindicate rights that exceeded the proper limits? But these exaggerations did not stand up; and the patrimony of merits accumulated by the popes remained, while the various holders of the papal office almost always were aware of the sense of responsibility incumbent upon them to govern in the name of God and according to the norms of a thousand-year-old tradition. Theirs was not an absolutism of the kind the emperors were vindicating on the basis of a rediscovered Roman law. It was an effort intended to organize private and public activities so as to create an organic body, a collective union, under the moral leadership of the Church of Rome. In the seal of the city of Cologne one reads: *Sancta Colonia, Dei gratia Romanae ecclesiae fidelis filia*. Similar declarations are found more or less everywhere in the Europe of those centuries. The results, noticeable even today, consisted in a common way of thinking and in a desire to form a large family, to unite under a common law, which, though already imprinted in the heart of every man, was now reflected also in the civil organization and protected by the representative of God. It is a title of honor for Europe to have lived for centuries in this order of ideas and to have derived from it the force for the accomplishment of a great many civil and cultural works destined to endure endlessly. In the flourishing of the new social energies that blossomed after the year 1000, people

drew inspiration and strength from religion; and one spirit, Christian and patriotic, animated them in the vindication of their fundamental liberties and in the explication of their genial professional activities. Today, as a divided and troubled world goes in search of an *ubi consistam*, this historical example of a happy fusion of many different interests may well offer a suggestion, not for a return to old positions or for the rejection of conquests already made by humanity, but for a greater awareness of a dutiful subordination of the contingent to the eternal, the useful to the necessary, the particular to the general.

4. *The "Theocracy" of Popes Innocent III and IV*

Perhaps with regard to no other pope is "theocracy" more talked about than in the case of Innocent III (Lotarius of the Counts of Segni, 1190–1216). He, more than any other, is charged with over-proud attitudes toward, and unjustified condemnations of, the temporal authorities. By this time, many prejudices have already been eliminated and inaccuracies corrected, while some of his declarations are being understood in their proper meaning. Moreover, it has also been shown, on documentary evidence, that Innocent maintained himself in a traditional order of ideas and that it was not he but his successor and homonym, Innocent IV, who was the first true theocratic pope; and above all, that the main concern of Innocent III was strictly a religious one and that his actions in the political field are explained in the light of such concern.

Thus, having eliminated every chance of misunderstanding, it is possible to present in its proper terms Innocent's concept of the spiritual power of the pope and his theology of the primacy. We shall not meet new doctrines, in the true sense of the word, but an unusual force in proclaiming the rights of the Roman See and a more conscious demonstration of the basic reasons

that justify them. First of all, he reaffirmed the idea that the pre-eminence of the pope in the Church is founded on the gospel passage of Matthew, which consecrated the position of the first pontiff and justified all the prerogatives, formularized later, in favor of his successors: "The primacy of the Apostolic See, which God has established, is proved by the testimonies of the Gospel and of the Apostle. From them are derived the canonical constitutions which unanimously assert that the Roman Church is above all others as teacher and mother." "As one only is the mediator between God and men, so Jesus Christ wished that in His Church only one be the head of all." "Christ placed at the head of all only one whom He appointed His vicar on earth, because, as before Him every knee is bent, so also all may obey His vicar, in order that there may be one sheepfold under one shepherd."

On this concept, Innocent insisted with almost exasperating monotony. But in these vindications, he did not go beyond the traditional formulae, found also in the homilies of Leo the Great and in the writings of St. Bernard, which were well known to him. It is quite true that he interpreted them in terms proper to a terrestrial domination, but this was his habitual usage: he loved to contrast the two worlds and to show that Rome had passed from a mundane to a spiritual empire, which had changed the values of her ancient glories and unified all her struggles in a profound historical synthesis. Therefore, if the *plenitudo potestatis*, that is, a sovereign and universal power, did belong to the pope, it was always confined to the spiritual, without direct reference to politics. In other words, the papal jurisdiction was, according to Innocent, ecclesiastical, not civil. Nor did he ever think of attributing the meaning of imperialistic claims to expressions he used with a purely religious significance. When he declared that to Peter had been entrusted the government not only of the entire Church but of

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all the world, or that the *principatum super universum saeculum* had been given to the Apostle, he had no desire for a *Welt-herrschaft* but was referring to well-known words of the liturgy, "We are constituted princes over the whole earth."

Hence, as pope, the bishop of Rome had no power whatsoever over the temporal, and the "great power" which he enjoys in this field, according to Innocent, is only that which he exercises in the Papal State government. But, since the origin of the Church dominion was due to donations, acquisitions and submissions, Innocent is careful in making the proper distinction between that which belongs to him as vicar of Christ and that which he possesses as temporal lord. This, naturally, does not contradict the fact that, owing to the political circumstances of the time and his own personal prestige, Innocent found himself to be the moral head of Europe, and that "the hand of his government" was felt from Portugal to Lithuania, from Ireland to the Orient. A few examples are worthy of mention: John, King of England, and Peter II of Aragon declared themselves his vassals; many Italian communes placed themselves under his protection; the repudiated bride of Philip Augustus of France had recourse to him and he, with excommunication and interdict, forced the tyrannical king to be reconciled with her. In similar manner, he humiliated other adulterous sovereigns, such as Alfonso of Portugal and Alfonso of León. Also, he imposed his will on the king of Norway and on the duke of Poland. He had the consolation of seeing the Christian army victorious over the Mussulmans at Las Navas de Tolosa and the Greek schism healed, at least for a time, even if only for political reasons, and while a Latin emperor ruled in Constantinople.

There is no doubt, therefore, that the political activities of Innocent III were beneficial and totally justified by the noblest of motives. In closing the brief account of his pontificate, we

should like to recall also that it was he who gave the seal of approval to the daring initiatives of Francis of Assisi and of Dominic Guzman. Innocent was aware of the great good the humble friars would render the Church, more by far than the untrustworthy vassal kings could ever do, and of the services which the militia of preachers of the truth directly authorized by Rome could render the Holy See in carrying out such a mission. The providential combination in one man of two diverse, but not antithetical, functions—the Catholic apostolate and the vast regulatory power exercised by the popes—accounts in large measure for the interest which the figure of Innocent III excites and for the actuality of his work.

With pressing logic, Innocent IV (Sinibaldo Fieschi, 1243–1254) drew extreme consequences from the premises laid by his predecessors, which led him to daring conclusions with regard to the extension of the papal powers. His juridical background enabled him to see the problems with extreme clarity and coherence. But he also employed some principles which were too rigid and controversial. It is no wonder, then, that his adversaries and succeeding generations found in his attitude much material for criticism. The concept of vicariate, which had already had a long history, as we have seen, became the fulcrum of the system of Innocent IV, who was convinced that he was the heir of those “King-priests” who had ruled the people of Israel in the Old Testament. In his opinion, therefore, the pope had every authority *naturaliter et potentialiter*, naturally and potentially, even if later the political power was not exercised directly by him. The transposition of the term *vicarius Christi* from the theological to the political field profoundly disturbed the entire traditional doctrine of the relations between the highest authorities, and contained an innate weakness which undermined its effectiveness. In fact, it rested on the lack of accuracy with respect to the attribution of the meaning of the

term "vicar," by which the authority of Christ was identified with that of the pope, making of the latter the *dominus universalis*, universal lord, and giving him a *legatio generalis*, a general delegation, which actually exceeded papal prerogatives.

It must be acknowledged that the dangers contained in such exaggerations were immediately perceived. This fact prompted some canonists to re-establish some distinctions, especially for what concerned the validity of natural laws, which prevail even against the will of the pope. We shall mention, in particular, the sharp analyses and the just criticisms by Olivi, who had already formulated what later was called the doctrine of indirect power. On the contrary, the thesis of direct power remained external to the great theology of the thirteenth century and, fortunately, did not enter into the principal current of Catholic doctrine dealing with political matters.

5. *The Reorganization of the Curia—Boniface VIII*

For a period of forty years following the death of Innocent IV, the Chair of Peter was occupied by various popes who reigned only a short time. Largely absorbed by urgent political disputes, they did little to further the papal "idea." However, the great philosopher and theologian, Thomas Aquinas (1227 c.-1274), with a sense of moderation that was peculiarly his own, gave a more precise definition of pontifical powers. Unfortunately, he did not deal fully with the subject because, at that time, the treatise *De ecclesia* had not yet become part the sphere of Catholic theology. Aquinas, in his work *About the Errors of the Greeks*, dealt with that question which constituted one of the main causes of controversy between the two churches. He stated that the pope had the right to determine matters of faith and that in these the judgment of the Church, which is identified with that of the pope, cannot err.

But even more than in the contribution of thinkers in the second half of the thirteenth century, the papacy found support in the solid curial organization, whose offices were being consistently strengthened and increased in number. Not to repeat offices already mentioned, we shall name the Apostolic Camera, which dealt with financial matters; the Chancery, which concerned itself with the sending out of letters and petitions and the conferring of benefices through the Dataria; the Penitentiary, which absolved from censures and granted dispensations. The principal questions were discussed between the pope and the cardinals at consistories which were held very often but always privately, except in the case of receptions of important persons and ambassadors. When all the cases could not be disposed of, the less important ones were turned to the palace auditors, who became the first nucleus of the Sacred Rota, organized later, in 1331. By now the appeals to Rome were becoming more frequent, while the sources of income too were growing both for the *servitia communia* (taxes for conferment of benefices, consecrations of bishops, etc.) and for the *ius spoli*, Peter's Pence, taxes from vassal kingdoms, annual taxes and other exceptional assessments. That prevaricators may have existed among the large number of staff members and that in the handling of some matters there may have been abuses or irregularities of various kinds, should surprise no one. Yet, the criticisms became quite commonplace and were artfully exaggerated, out of personal resentment. It remains the duty of genuine historical criticism, then, to sift true from false accusations.

Another aspect of the papacy in this period deserving to be underscored consists of the close bonds between the papal curia and the patrician families of Rome. The latter brought into the ecclesiastical sphere their differences, their aspirations, their divergent political tendencies, creating dangerous internal dis-

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agreements and bringing changes in the administration with every new pope. Because of this and the above-mentioned financial embezzlements, the most violent accusations were hurled against the Church and the popes. All know at least Dante's invectives:

And were it not that I am bid forbear
By reverence still of the all-sacred Keys,
.....
Mine should be words yet weightier; for sad
Your avarice is making all the world.
Trampling the good, and raising up the bad.
Truly, you shepherds did the Evangelist mean
Even when she that sitteth on the waters,
Whoring with kings, by him, he says, was seen,
She that was given indeed seven heads at birth,
And for assurance of her right ten horns
The while her husband gloried in true worth.
Silver and gold ye make your God . . .
(*The Divine Comedy*, Inferno, xix, 100–112)

Among many others, here is an offensive description of ecclesiastical dignitaries:

Their mantles cover up their palfreys so
That two beasts seem to move beneath one skin.
(*The Divine Comedy*, Paradise, xxi, 133–134)

Thus, it is easy to explain how in many cases there arose as a reaction the desire to see on the Chair of St. Peter a spiritual pope, an angelic pontiff; and how a *renovatio*, a renovation or the advent of a new era oriented more toward Christian ideals, was anxiously awaited. At a certain moment, when disgust with the arrangement had reached a climax, it was decided to make a new experiment by electing someone outside the college of cardinals, chosen only for his recognized saintliness. However, the

papacy of Celestine V (Peter of Morone, 1294) resulted instead in a pitiful farce, and it became necessary to try, instead, a man with a strong hand. Immediately after Celestine's "great refusal" (the only example in the whole history of the papacy), Benedetto Caetani was chosen. He was an authoritarian man and a learned canonist, under whose guidance the estate of the papacy rose once again, after the long period following the death of Innocent IV.

All the threads of the history of medieval papacy come together and are woven into the papacy of Boniface VIII, to make up the tragic grandeur of this exceptional figure. We shall not dwell upon his administration, except for a mention of the celebration of the Jubilee. This, in fact, was a typical manifestation of the primacy in its highest function, binding and absolving the sins of man in the name of God. The celebration of the first Jubilee was a superb spectacle of strength and faith, opening to the Holy See new possibilities for action, establishing contacts of spiritual order with the faithful, at a time when the multitudes were detaching themselves from the Church as the result of new cultural and political trends. In the extremely delicate work of merging the old and the new, passing from one vision of reality to another, the Jubilee was the answer to many and varied needs, such as the longing for salvation, a slightly fanatical popular fervor, love for large-scale external celebrations, and the like. However, only the intelligence and the energy of the pope were able to guide all this toward a precise middle road and give form and direction to the movement, succeeding at the same time in transforming it into a solemn act of papal supremacy.

It is in the writings of Boniface VIII that are found the most valuable testimonies of the history of the Roman primacy. In them, the doctrine is presented in a concise and clear form which gives particular effectiveness to the thought. This fact,

however, did not prevent the thesis of the pope from being impractical in an early fourteenth century Europe, rich with energies and eager for adventure. In fact, the painful end of the aged pontiff, outraged in his own Anagni by thugs of the king of France and by the implacable Colonnas, marked the end of a world—the fall of medieval universality in which there had been complete union of religion and politics, and subordination of the temporal to the spiritual. However, what was lost in the transition was only that bit of overambition and frailty which had become encrusted upon the fundamental prerogatives of the papacy. It is not by chance that the conclusion of the bull *Unam Sanctum*, rising to an *ex cathedra* definition, is much more moderate than the context might suggest, and in no way does it bring any harm upon the magisterium of the papal chair.

Instead, the writers contemporary with Boniface, not sharing his responsibilities, went to the extreme limits of reasonableness and, in the enthusiasm of the polemics directed at defending the pope at all costs, developed in his favor all those motives which in substance we already know: fullness of power over the spiritual and the temporal; all earthly authority coming from him and, therefore, his right to judge the actions of kings and to intervene; identity of rights between Christ and His Vicar so that there might be perfect equality between the person representing and the one represented (which is not true).

Between the two contending schools there was one that tried to find a basis for agreement, recognizing equality of rights to "only two," as Dante states, though granting the pope a moral superiority in view of the supramundane end of his sphere of activities. However, since the interpretations of Dante's political thought have been many, often contradictory and incorrect, it is only proper to mention several sentences from his *De*

monarchia, in which the relations between the religious and the political authorities are stated in a manner that is free of both the exaggerations of the curialists and the claims of the royalists: "The temporal government receives from the spiritual, not its legitimacy, the source of its authority, or the norms for its activity, but rather a direction to act more virtuously according to the light of grace, which the blessing of the pope distributes to all. . . . Caesar must have toward Peter the reverence of a first son toward his father, so that, illumined by paternal grace, he may better accomplish his tasks on earth, having received that place from him, who governs all things both spiritual and temporal." We are already on the way to new formulae, to more moderate and comprehensive theories, accepted even by wise and outstanding theologians of the fourteenth century. However, in order to reach this point, it was necessary to learn by hard experience that times had changed.

1. Papal Universality and Insurgent Nationalism

If one were to compare the splendor of the Roman Church under the popes of the thirteenth century, its numerous manifestations of power, and the proud declarations of absolute supremacy, with the conditions in which the same Church found itself in the course of the fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries, on account of bitter opposition from doctrinaires and politicians, he might not consider an exaggeration Dante's exclamation of dismayed wonderment, "How did I get here and when?"

2. The Papacy in the Fourteenth Century

As history abundantly proves, periods cannot be neatly contrasted, since the points of contact and the grassroot connections between one and the other period of papal history are much more numerous than one would ordinarily think. Thus, despite the fact that symptoms of grave difficulties were already present in the periods of the Church's triumphs, yet at crucial moments the principle of papal primacy always came through safely

insofar as its essential elements were concerned. The fact remains, however, that with the beginning of the fourteenth century, a profound crisis was taking place in the system of current relations between the Catholic Church and the temporal civilization. Up to that time, the whole of human life had been organized with a view to the world beyond the grave, and men's various activities were motivated by the Christian concept of the world; but, from now on, interests would tend toward divergent directions, with a conflict arising between the two ideals. Among other forces, particular mention is to be made of the bitter nationalism responsible for breaking up the religious-political universality of the Middle Ages and for attempts to form national churches. This was indeed the most fearful and insidious weapon that could ever be used against the Catholic Church and the papacy, because it aimed at the very heart of its universal character. Thus, it can be said that this entire period was characterized by a duel between these two forces, and by the reverberations registered in the various sectors of ecclesiastical and secular life.

The chief elements of the story are well known. Upon the death of Boniface VIII, followed soon by the death of his meek and wise successor, Benedict XI, the conclave met at Perugia and, after many uncertainties, chose Bertrand de Got, Archbishop of Bordeaux (1305). The newly elected pope did not wish to come to Italy, but ordered the transfer of the curia to Lyons for his consecration. Before long, his stay in France, from temporary, became permanent, with some rather thin justification in its favor (Avignon was not subject to the King of France but to the Anjous, who were feudal dependants of the Holy See through the Kingdom of Sicily). Thus, all the curial offices fell into the hands of the "Cahorsians," Gascons or other provincials who formed a very intricate net of family interests to the utter detriment of ecclesiastical independence. The

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insistence for the return to Rome of the papacy and its court never ceased, although for nearly seventy years all efforts proved in vain. When, after several unsuccessful attempts, the transfer finally did take place, a new French opposition arose immediately. Upon the death of Gregory XI (1378) riots broke out over the election of a successor (Urban VI, Bartolomeo Prignano), and a few months later a secession of the French cardinals took place which culminated in the election of an antipope (Clement VII) and the constitution of two authorities, one in Rome and the other at Avignon.

The long schism continued for forty years with undecisive waverings, complicated by thousands of other problems, some minor and others more serious. Finally a solution was found in the convocation of a general council at Constance. Here, after the popes in office were deposed or abdicated, Martin V (Oddone Colonna, 1417-1431) was properly elected. Favored by a unanimous recognition, he was able to resume the long-interrupted work of reform and reorganization. However, the main problems still remained unsettled and the ups and downs continued. Other councils were convened, but the difficulties grew until an open rebellion was started in a large part of Christianity; and, among those who should have been loyal faithful, there arose, not reformers, but revolutionaries who refused to recognize the pope as universal head and pastor of the Church. From that day, the seamless garment of Christ was torn, the Mystical Body mutilated, the plant horribly uprooted out of the rich earth. The skid down the slope of spiritual deterioration and administrative disorganization which had started at the beginning of the fourteenth century and had gained momentum with the passing of each decade that followed, reached its climax in the early part of the sixteenth century and caused incalculable damage to the entire ecclesiastical organism.

What effects did these events have, not so much on papal history, as on what is usually called the theology of primacy? In other words, can it be said that the popes at Avignon enjoyed the independence considered indispensable for the exercise of their spiritual functions? In answering this important question we will say that, though one or the other of the seven popes of the period of "captivity" may have been too docile to royal injunctions and partial to the French in financial or diplomatic matters, yet none of them could properly be accused of dereliction in carrying out their strictly religious obligations. The fact remains, however, that the people had the impression that the curia did not enjoy the freedom of action it needed. Thus, though papal prestige suffered much, actual accusations cannot be made. It is related that some English soldiers during the Hundred Years' War, contemporary with the papal stay in Avignon, stated: "If the Pope is French, Jesus Christ is English." But this, more than anything else, is to be considered as a preoccupying symptom of schism and the beginning of a distinction which will be deepened by Protestants, so as to drive a wedge between Christ and the Catholic clergy. In all objectivity, however, it must be recognized that the pope, as religious leader and teacher of doctrine and morals, was neither of French nor any other nationality, even if in the mind of the people he had lost to a considerable degree the mark of his universality. Proof of the unchangeable religious mission of the pope is found in the numerous interventions by the popes of the fourteenth century in matters of faith (the definition by Benedict XII on the beatific vision is a true *ex cathedra* definition) or of discipline (such as the condemnation of the Fraticelli). And so, too, the sure and compelling exercise of papal doctrinal authority remained constant and uninterrupted based on the conviction of the Roman Church's possession (it was always Roman, even if it resided at Avignon) of powers and preroga-

tives which gave her the exclusive title to be mother and infallible teacher of all. This was also the current opinion among theologians and canonists of the period, who never failed to reaffirm it every time they had to refute wrong ideas about the Church and the papacy which were so widespread at the time. Thus Giles of Rome writes, "It is up to the pope to ordain the Symbol of faith and to establish that which concerns morals, because in every controversy regarding faith and morals, it is his duty to give a definite sentence and to order with firmness that which Christians must do." James of Viterbo states: "Only the Roman pontiff, Vicar of Christ, successor of Peter, enjoys the highest spiritual authority, is king of all kings, pastor of pastors, father of fathers, head of the faithful and of those who govern the faithful. He has the power to exercise a direct rule on the whole Church. He is the general judge who cannot be judged by anyone, the regulator of religion, the dispenser of treasures, the distributor of titles, the institutor of canons. He approves laws and explains all that Christians must know."

However, these authors mingled their correct explanations of the position of the pope in the Church with imprudent vindications of exorbitant political powers. Among the paradoxical statements of these exaggerated advocates of papal omnipotence, we shall mention one found in a commentary on the *Decretals*, in which the superiority of papal authority over that of the emperor was set to the proportion of 57 to 1! Other canonists continued to write treatises entitled *De potentia papae*, "About the Power of the Pope," in which, with a directness worthy of a better cause, they kept repeating that *tota terra laicorum est in censum ecclesiae*, "the whole domain of the laity is under the jurisdiction of the Church." Quite different from these fanatical and anachronistic doctrinaires was Catherine of Siena (†1380). She, too, defended and exalted

the papacy, but insisted on other aspects of the institution, such as its function of continuing to make Christ visible on earth. She did not spare reproaches, nor was she afraid to use the most audacious expressions against the weak popes with whom she dealt. But in all her writings there is so much love for and devotion to the pope that we can easily see how she was able to solve even the most delicate problems.

Meanwhile, with a compilation of writings by the most ardent curialists, there appeared works of completely different tenor written by famous authors, such as William Ockham and Marsilius of Padua. Their attacks against papal prerogatives went farther than those made by earlier polemicists because they brought into discussion the entire essence and constitution of the Church and rejected even the hierarchical principle which is the foundation of papal functions. The historical reasons for which the bishop of Rome proclaimed himself successor of St. Peter, the theological argumentations on the necessity of an ecclesiastical mediation between God and the believer, the extension of the jurisdictional powers of the papal *principatum*—all were attacked by these writers, who, instead, held the people to be the source of sovereignty and laid in the hands of the prince the most extensive powers of government. According to Marsilius, no privileged place for Peter appears in the context of the Gospel passage, outside of a certain primacy of honor which does not elevate the Apostle above the others, as the pope had claimed with regard to the bishops. Moreover, he continues, Peter did not come to Rome; therefore, the bishops of that city are not his successors but the heirs of the imperial power, and the powers which they exercised were given them by Constantine with the *Donatio*, which (so it appears) Marsilius still accepted. Less radical was William Ockham, who did recognize the divine institution of the papacy, but contested the abusive extension of its prerogatives, which

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theologians and canonists had attributed to it by a wrong exegesis of New Testament passages.

With a bull of October 23, 1327, John XXII had solemnly condemned the principal errors of the *Defensor pacis*, "Defender of the peace." However, those ideas could not be totally eliminated and were frequently re-echoed here and there. In its own way, even the Golden Bull issued by Charles IV in 1356 is a sign of the times because, by reserving exclusively to the seven German electors the selection of the candidate to the empire, the complete emancipation of the empire from the papacy was effected and the type of nationalism that is implicit in all the political systems of modern Europe was enhanced.

If the legitimacy of the spiritual power of the popes was placed in doubt, so much the more were their rights in political matters denied or greatly limited. The very principle of a temporal power possessed by ecclesiastics was under attack. The entire body politic was becoming secularized; the *ordinatio ad unum* of medieval Christianity, which had had, at least theoretically, the pope as its head, was disappearing. It was not wrong for each nation to organize itself, centering power in its sovereign and giving life to efficient administrative offices; but it was not necessary that the dissolution of the spiritual unity of Europe should be the price for attaining this end. If it was proper to work toward a governmental organization which had been sorely lacking in the Middle Ages, this did not have to be brought about by the use of violence against pre-existing ecclesiastical institutions and by the rejection of the universalistic concept of the papacy. With all restraints broken by the impetus of passion, the more important things were cast aside and the way was opened to the gravest consequences.

While these controversies raged, the pope had to face other difficulties resulting from the use of the new system in the distribution of benefices to clerics. It is necessary to mention this

because it had noteworthy consequences in the history of ecclesiastical centralization and of the progressive increase of papal importance as a central organ of Catholic organization.

In order to live and be able to carry out their functions, clerics in the Middle Ages enjoyed "benefices" given by private persons or taken from the common patrimony of the Church. Their distribution to individual ecclesiastics was reserved to the bishops. But from the second half of the thirteenth century, as a result of the application of the principle of the fullness of papal jurisdiction, the popes too began to confer benefices left vacant by the death of curial titulars. In the fourteenth century, the granting of benefices by the pope became a general rule. But here again, it must be recognized that what led to this step was the necessity of checking the infringement by the state and the tendency of the laity to put their hands on the wealth of the clergy. Thus, the pattern set by the civil governments in the centralization of powers was also followed by the popes with regard to their subjects. The great author of this reform was John XXII (1316-1334), a brilliant financier and a born organizer who, by multiplying the number of benefices reserved to the Holy See and by conferring an increasing number of them directly, ended by almost completely replacing the ordinaries in these matters and so formed among the minor functionaries a faithful following and a valuable auxiliary. The recruiting of bishops also was turned almost entirely over to the popes, because of the great number of abuses (favoritism, negligence, simoniacal negotiations) which took place in some areas. Thus, a considerable degree of efficiency was brought into the ecclesiastical machinery, with great advantages for the Holy See, but not without an ever-growing resentment on the part of the faithful, who were experiencing a fearful increase in taxes, annual contributions and various other types of ecclesiastical assessments which were cutting deeply into

their income.

And yet the popes of this period, who appeared to be so powerful in relation to the lower clergy, were in turn tied by very heavy commitments to the college of cardinals. For instance, in 1352, upon the death of Clement VI, the participants in the conclave signed something which amounted to a capitulation, or pre-election agreement, and which may well be considered as the first of the famous rules put into effect in almost all the papal elections of modern times. In general, the candidate to the papacy had to promise not to nominate new members to the Sacred College without the consent of the old members, to listen to the cardinals before taking important political and administrative decisions, to distribute large prebends, and so on. But often, as soon as the nomination had taken place, the new pope declared void every obligation to which he had committed himself, justifying his action on the grounds that the promises had been extorted by coercion or that, during the vacancy, no one had power to issue provisions of such a restrictive nature.

3. Discussions on the Constitution of the Church

Even disregarding some evident excesses which took place at the time of the great schism, by which even the unitarian constitution of the Church was denied, it is undoubtedly true that in that period the papal prestige was dealt a severe blow. The papacy was humiliated in every way, and its executive authority reduced to the minimum. The various colleges of cardinals, which were exponents respectively of national and local trends and interests, controlled the titulars almost at will; and even the rights of the Holy See in the matter of benefices, which had gained much ground during the fourteenth century, lost out almost completely. Theories less favorable to the monarchical

principle were advanced, holding that in apostolic times there had been only two hierarchical orders, the presbyters and the deacons. From this it was only a short way to some subtle and improper distinctions between the universal Church and the papal Church. Finally, it was stated that only a general council was the regular medium of ecclesiastical government and enjoyed supreme power. In fact, it was observed, if the Church was the *universitas fidelium*, the collectivity of all the faithful, the council represented the masses of the faithful and had the authority to make a decision in cases of controversy, particularly in a case such as the one on hand in which there was more than one pope. Anyway, the serious constitutional crisis, which for a long time had been making its way into Christianity, reached its peak during the Western Schism and the consequent convocation of the Council of Constance (1414). Again the *punctum dolens*, the troublesome point, of the question was represented by the discussions around the Roman pontificate. In the confusion caused by the plurality of obediences and the vicious character of certain theories, many sincere believers were divided into various camps and, in good faith but with little justification, leaned to this or that pope. Yet, popular good sense understood that, without a unique and powerful head, all the strength of the Christian ideal was in jeopardy and the religious life of the community was in danger. Undoubtedly, this unnoticed but strong current had a beneficial influence upon the intemperate polemicists and the politicians.

The dissension existing in the very heart of the Catholic clergy was but a phase of a vaster conflict existing in all political spheres at the end of the Middle Ages, between the monarchical tendency, which leaned toward the centralization of power, and the feudal or aristocratic tendency, which was bent on maintaining and increasing autonomies and, as a consequence, on defending parliaments and other medieval forms of

representation. A great parliament, in fact, was the Ecumenical Council of Constance, with all the verbosity and personalism proper to such assemblies. These elements, of course, contributed to its failure. Moreover, the popes found their natural allies in the sovereigns, who obviously were supporters of absolutism. They claimed an abundant reward for their support, extorting from the Holy See many concessions, including that of the free handling of ecclesiastical affairs within their own realm by virtue of faculties delegated to them by the popes. Thus, the clergy, which had hoped to free itself from curial despotism, found itself faced with a much more rigid and oppressive royal absolutism, while the universality proper to the Christian Church was threatened by the formation of national churches, loath to maintain their ties with Rome.

Already in the writings of William Durandus the younger (†1328) and John of Paris (†1306) we find the concept that the council is a court of appeals if the reigning pope does not fulfill his duty. Conrad of Gelnhausen, in his *Letter of Union* written in Paris in 1380, went one step further, saying that popes can err, but not the councils. Therefore, the persuasion grew that popes could be deposed if they failed, because the good of the Church is the supreme law and, to effect this, it is proper to go also against the popes, convene councils without their consent, impose reforms and the like. The principal theoreticians of conciliarism, however, were Peter D'Ailly and John Gerson, both of the Sorbonne and authors also of important spiritual writings. Since they were influenced by William Ockham, they did not favor papal primacy. According to D'Ailly, the jurisdiction of bishops and priests is derived from Christ and not from the pope, who is the *principalis inter ministros*, principal among the ministers, and exercises his office *ministerialiter*, ministerially. No see has any primacy attached to itself. Any Christian and even the pope can always appeal to

the council and obtain a judgment or a decision. Gerson recognized the monarchical system of the Church and papal primacy, but he did not accept the immediate authority of the pope over the various churches. Such a function, he held, is under the control of and in dependence on the universal Church through the council, in which an ordinary priest and perhaps also the laity have the right to participate. According to Cardinal Zabarella, too, and Nicolò Tudeschi, "Panormitanus," the council represents the Church, and the pope is only a minister of the Church. The infallibility promised by Christ concerns the Church as such, and not a person in particular. Moreover, in questions of faith, the opinion of any private person could be worth more than that of the pope, if the former is more learned and capable than the latter.

Strengthened by such opinions, the Council of Constance issued several decrees which were supposed to furnish a theoretical justification of its position, and to legalize the decisions taken, irrespective of the pope's absence or disapproval. However, such dispositions remained without legal value because they did not obtain a unanimity of consent and also because, in approving the acts, as he left the Council, Martin V made the explicit reservation that they were not to be prejudicial "to the rights, the dignity and the pre-eminence of the Apostolic See."

Now, though the doctrine of the superiority of the council over the pope did not obtain juridical force, yet the conviction remained in the minds of all Christians that councils were useful, that they contributed to the efficient handling of ecclesiastical affairs and favored desirable reforms. But these were attacks made upon papal primacy, especially in that terribly agitated atmosphere. In fact, a few years later (1431) a new council, convened in another Swiss city, Basle, took up again and carried to extreme conclusions the conciliaristic attitudes. Besides the usual opposition of the high clergy to the curia,

there was in the assembly some restlessness on the part of the lower clergy against the privileges of bishops and cardinals. For these reasons, Eugene IV (1431-1447), wishing to give proof of great tolerance, was ready to go to the limit in granting all possible concessions. But since no sign of good will was seen in the opposition, he decided to use severe methods. Excommunications were issued from both sides. The Basleans even proceeded to the election of an antipope (Felix V, the ex-duke of Savoy, Amadeus VIII—elected in 1439), but their cause was a lost one. Reduced to about thirty persons, abandoned by their best supporters, they ended in humiliation, while the pope obtained two very great victories in the council convened by him at Ferrara, later transferred to Florence. Here in 1439, it was solemnly established as a dogma of faith that "the Roman Pontiff has the primacy over the entire world, that he is the successor of Peter, prince of the Apostles, true Vicar of Christ, head of the whole Church, father and teacher of all Christians. To him in the person of Peter was conferred by our Lord Jesus Christ the full power to feed the Church in its entirety, to guide her and rule over her."

Moreover, he had the joy of seeing the return of the Easterners to the See of Peter. After long discussions, they had recognized not only the fact of the primacy but also the right of the bishops of Rome to it. But this time, too, their return was fictitious (eighty years before, the Byzantine emperor, John V, had abjured in the hands of Urban V, but the agreement was never ratified) because Constantinople fell and a Greek synod in 1472 revoked the decisions, which had met with much hostility in the East. However, the fact of their recognition of the pope's position remains. They held him to be above all criticism, and as possessing the faculty of arbiter and peacemaker.

The most acute phase of the conciliary crisis was by this time

overcome and, to strengthen the results obtained, there appeared on the scene various illustrious doctrinaires, such as Thomas Walden of England (†1430), Antonine of Florence, Cardinal Juan de Torquemada (†1468, author of a magnificent treatise on the Church, *Summa de ecclesia*, in which he sharply criticizes all the arguments of the adversaries), Gabriel Biel (†1495, the German author of a defense of apostolic obedience dedicated to Pius II, *Defensorium obedientiae apostolicae ad Pium II dedicatum*), as well as able canonists such as Capistran, Capranica, Piero da Monte, and others. Nor must we overlook the peculiar change of heart by outstanding persons such as Nicholas of Cusa, Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini, and other less known but no less fervent advocates of the superiority of the council, who passed to the papal side, retracting their past ideas and justifying their new convictions with good arguments (note the bull of retraction of April 26, 1463, directed to the University of Cologne by Piccolomini, who later became Pope Pius II). In substance this was their line of thought: In face of the damage and scandals of the schism, the council was a "lesser evil," but since even this remedy proved to be precarious, it was clear that the salvation of the Church could be found only in a central authority. In the thinking of these theologians, the privilege of the pope was that he enjoyed a *potestatem infringibilem*, an inviolable power, in determining the truths of faith and in the suppression of heresy. Such a privilege was based on the formal promise of Christ to Peter; it conferred on the pope a primacy of a supreme and plenary character. To the objection, which at the time was frequently repeated, regarding the possibility that the pope might fall into error, the defenders answered that, in such cases, the pope would cease being a pope and his decisions would immediately lose their value. For this reason, someone recommended that he "use the council to ask the counsel of the universal Church" before mak-

ing decisions. During the lively discussions for and against papal superiority, the question of papal powers in temporal matters passed into second place, while the advocates of papal omnipotence even in regard to the states had diminished almost to a vanishing point. The theocratic positions, which, practically, had already been conquered by the vigorous nationalistic offensive, were abandoned even in theory in favor of a more moderate thesis. This held to the principle that the pope does not have *regulariter sive directe*, ordinarily or directly, any authority in temporal matters, but that he deals with them only insofar as the preservation of spiritual interests, the directing of the faithful toward eternity, the correction of errants, and the defense of peace may require it. Another interesting development is not only the recognition, by now already unanimous, of the validity of natural law in spite of any dispensation or papal decision, but also the belief that if the popes overstepped the limits of the rules set by nature—that is, by God—they should no longer be obeyed.

4. *The Popes of the Renaissance*

With the long and insidious conciliary disputes terminated quite favorably for the papacy, other urgent problems demanded the greatest attention of the Roman Curia. Among others must be mentioned the resistance to the impending Turkish invasion in the Mediterranean, the position to take in face of the renaissance movement and its spirit, the consolidation of the Papal State in the game of Italian and European political struggles. All these questions bore on religion, even though from very different angles, and were unrelated to any movement of reform or to aspirations toward a higher spirituality, the true elements capable of renewing Christianity and

enabling the papacy to resume the leadership of western civilization.

One of the most tragic signs of the changed spiritual condition of Europe lies in the indifference with which were received the repeated and pathetic papal appeals for a union of all Christian forces against the Turks. The crusades themselves had not been an easy matter, nor did all men respond to the call out of a desire to defend the faith or to obey the pope and earn merits for the next world. However, a definite religious trend and an evident sign of papal moral leadership was shown in those undertakings. Now, instead, nothing could eliminate mutual distrust or mental reservations, so that the desire for immediate advantages tended to nullify every initiative and frustrated the good intent of the few. On the contrary, the popes of the period were, in this matter, all in agreement and well disposed. Outstanding was Pius II (1458-1464), who, broken by labor for the formation of a Christian coalition, ended his turbulent existence at Ancona, where he had gone to bless the departing ships. But with his death his cherished dream vanished too. The generous tenacity of his successors did not diminish, especially in view of the fact that the danger represented by the Turks became always more pressing, to such a point that with the capture of Otranto even the Italian soil had been invaded by the infidels.

In order properly to understand the position of the popes in the face of the Renaissance, it is necessary, first of all, to understand what is really meant by the term. The Renaissance is not to be considered as a reaction to medieval "chains" or as a manifestation of liberty of spirit against dogmatism. It was not even a pure and simple return to the classic mentality out of contempt for Christian revelation, or an exclusively esthetic search for serenity of life. When the Renaissance is viewed as an attempt to restore autonomy to the various human activities di-

rected to enriching with a variety of experiences the earthly period of man's existence, no insoluble conflict appears between the Renaissance and the Christian concept of the world. On the contrary, it can be considered as the beginning of a more complete and clearer understanding of the very gospel message itself. With this in mind, it is easy to evaluate the popes' attitude toward that great phenomenon. We already have had occasion to point out that during the whole medieval era the popes had favored or defended culture. Therefore, no one will be surprised to see them still faithful to this practice during the fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries. However, it was now not so much a matter of spurring on, as of moderating intemperances and correcting deviations by men of culture. Thus, without opposing the legitimate aspirations of the era, the Church had to protect the rights of religion and morals and take a few precautionary measures so as to maintain the movement on its right course and keep its activities within bounds. The results were impressive. It is superfluous to enumerate here not only the literary works, but also the works of art produced to adorn papal residences or places in some way connected with the Holy See. In the serene atmosphere of the early Renaissance, art brought its contribution to the Chair of St. Peter, by exalting its supreme power. Moreover, the artistic renovation of almost all the sacred edifices of the city, the building of new residences for the high clergy, the rediscovering of the works of the fathers of the first Christian centuries and their collection in the Vatican Library, showed the world "what a great institution the Roman Church was," as Vasari stated apropos of Nicholas V, the humble Thomas Parentucelli, elevated to the highest office in 1447 to the edification of a large number of people, who admired in him genuine piety combined with the greatest love for art.

Far less happy, however, were the political conditions of the

Holy See, particularly in the second half of the fifteenth century. As late as in 1455, Nicholas V had had the joy of announcing from the Lateran the formation of the league that saw the five major states of the peninsula bound together in a balance of power that was to be a harbinger of peace. It was also a source of great satisfaction for him to receive the plea from other member states: "Deign to be the custodian of the union and of the confederate agreement as a common father and leader and protector of all." But under his successors, Sixtus IV (1471-84) and Innocent VIII (1484-92), papal prestige reached its lowest point. It was necessary for the pope to enjoy security and be master in his own house. Thus, in order to avoid endangering his freedom of action in the religious field and prevent foreign powers from being a threat to him, he had to reaffirm his sovereignty in Rome and over the various country squires of the state. To achieve this objective, unfortunately, the popes chose to use their own families. This caused them to become enmeshed in humiliating intrigues and to descend to shameful acts as long as the fortunes of their families were enhanced and their power safeguarded. The remedy was almost worse than the evil itself, for, finding themselves deeply involved in diplomatic complications, the popes allowed their temporal preoccupations as heads of state to take priority over their religious obligations as heads of all Christendom. To this must also be added their moral weaknesses, although the personal faults of the incumbents do not in any way militate against the authority of the See. Also, since we are concerned more with the historical development of the institution than with the individual personalities of the popes, we shall neither speak of the weaknesses of one Alexander VI (1492-1503), nor attempt to free him from the unwarranted accusations made against him. Naturally, every good person rebels at the thought that unworthy men should have been the

heads of his religion and successors to so many saints. However, the serenity of his faith is not shaken by such events because the irrefutable fact remains that even the worst pope did not fail in his specific duties as custodian of revelation, infallible teacher, and high priest. No word or writing of those popes, as unlike ecclesiastics as they may have been, contradicted dogma, sanctioned error or went counter to the decisions of the Catholic supreme teaching power.

However, it is not difficult to understand how there arose, almost naturally, doubts and objections as to the validity of acts performed by popes elected irregularly or acting only on the basis of interest and greed. The most clamorous incident in this regard took place between Alexander VI and Friar Girolamo Savonarola, to whom the pope directed several letters ordering him to stop his Florentine preaching. The Dominican friar, knowing that some of his political enemies were placing him in bad light in Rome in an effort to disgrace him, declared that he was obeying God rather than his superiors, because these commanded things "against charity and against the Gospel. I do not believe that the pope would ever do so; but if he should do it, I would say to him: 'Now you are not the Pastor, you are not the Roman Church, you err!'" Apparently, Savonarola entered into a dangerous distinction between the pope's orders and his intentions, and reached open disobedience in the conviction that his mission was willed by God. He did intend to submit to the Church, but he also used expressions of extreme violence against the Roman "harlot." When excommunicated, he continued to resist, saying that his excommunication was based on invented accusations and called the pope a "bad penny." He dedicated a Lenten series of sermons to the explanation of cases in which the pope can err, while the principle of his infallibility as Vicar of Christ still remained safe.

Without going into a detailed evaluation of Savonarola's works and attitudes, we shall limit ourselves to observing that the disciplinary measures taken against him were justified in view of his disobedience, which was all the more serious in that he was a religious and a priest. However, the manner in which the papal orders were carried out was by no means blameless.

That which other popes had tried to do for the benefit of their own families, Julius II (Giuliano della Rovere, 1503–1513) aimed to accomplish for the Church itself. His plan consisted in organizing a sound state with a directive function in Italy to serve as a safe basis from which the pope's voice could be heard in Europe. His goal was the temporal greatness of the Church. He also held that for the good of Italy, rather than a league among the major states, a great and strong state was necessary, to act as a bulwark against foreign intruders and to keep peace within the peninsula. Julius II believed that the Papal State was called to such a task, both because of its position in the center of Italy and because of the moral prestige which religion projected upon that country, and also because of its financial and military possibilities. The zeal of the pope was above suspicion and his ability outstanding. But, in reality, he had undertaken too heavy a task for those times, and the project ended in shipwreck, owing to the political circumstance then prevailing in Europe. In order to chase some "barbarians" out of the country, he had to rely on others, with great detriment to the Venetian Republic, which was still one of the most efficient forces of the peninsula.

However, what deserves particular notice here is Julius II's belief that papal political supremacy should agree with and be the premise of religious primacy. In fact, the conflict with the king of France moved immediately into the field of dogmatic controversies with the convening by the king of the Council of Pisa, at which the old arguments against the privileges of the

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Roman See were taken up again. Julius II in turn convened a council of his own held at the Lateran, on May 3, 1512. At this council, before discussing the problems regarding religious reform and the defense of Catholic doctrine, the Pisa decisions, which "had placed Peter beneath the Church and had subordinated the pope to the council, placing the sheep above the pastor and the members above the head," were condemned. In the same council, the reasons which oblige all Christians to obey the pope were learnedly presented by Thomas de Vio Cardinal Cajetan, a Dominican and a great commentator of St. Thomas. In his treatise *Auctoritas papae et concilii, sive ecclesiae, comparata* he held that the council does not derive its powers directly from God and cannot represent the Church unless it is united with the pope. Moreover, the pope possesses a supreme authority, which he has received from Christ himself. In view of the supreme end of mankind he exercises direct authority over spiritual matters, but over temporal matters only in view of the spiritual, recognizing as valid the civil powers of non-Christian states and of those which do not enjoy any recognition by the Church, inasmuch as they rest on positive human law. The book was denounced at the Sorbonne as "suspicious and injurious" and refuted by James Almain article by article. Cajetan counterattacked with his *Apologia tractatus de comparata auctoritate papae et concilii* (*Defense of the Treatise about the Authority of the Pope Compared to that of the Council*). The dispute was ended because the king of France in the meanwhile concluded an agreement with the pope, and he did not wish that obstacles should stand in the way of good relations between the Church and his state.

The death of Julius II in 1513 and the political developments that followed prevented the implementation of the proposals of a spiritual renewal of Christianity as enunciated in the

Lateran Council. However, the council is remembered for initiative taken by the pope to begin the work of reform, and a clear defense of papal primacy that could be considered almost as a step that put an end to the long discussions carried on in the preceding century with regard to this subject. Nor was it by accident that the same pope undertook the reconstruction of the Vatican basilica of St. Peter, erecting a "New Olympus" on the tomb of the Apostle with the participation of the best artists of the time. This was an exterior sign of a renewed awareness of the rights of the pope. It was also a comfort drawn from the purest heaven of art, in the midst of the many difficulties encountered in the daily exercise of his power.

The successor of Julius II, Leo X (Giovanni de' Medici, 1513-1521), was of a different temperament; and with obvious reference to an expression in the gospel, it was said of him that the salt had lost its savor, so vast was his lack of sensitiveness to the grave problems that demanded attention during his reign. If we lay aside his irrefutable merits in the cultural and artistic fields, we can credit him only with the Concordat of Noyon in 1516, concluded with Francis I, King of France. By this concordat, France repudiated the Pragmatic Sanction of Bourges of 1439, which was an application of the decrees of the Council of Basle gravely limiting papal rights, but obtained in return ample concessions in the nomination of bishops and in other matters. It was a compromise due to the difficult circumstances of the times, but it saved France from the Protestant Reformation and helped prepare the Catholic revival of the sixteenth century in spite of the persistent attempt on the part of the kings to keep alive the spirit of the Pragmatic Sanction, as we shall see later on the occasion of the Gallican struggles. Similarly, there were in Germany analogous attitudes, which took form in the *Gravamina* of the German nation against the true or presumed abuses of the curia. But here, either because

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of wrong tactics used or because the difficulties were too serious, the break became inevitable. It would seem improper to make Leo X responsible for all this, yet Von Pastor, who cannot be suspected of bias against the popes, recognizes that "the center of gravity of the actions of this pope was not ecclesiastical" and pessimistically concludes: "On many points, the last word on the Medici pontiff has not yet been said, but, insofar as we are able to ascertain today, we must hold that because of his unlimited abandon to mundane tendencies and new resplendent forms of civilization, as well as for putting ecclesiastical matters second, his pontificate, with great exaggeration extolled to the skies by humanists and poets, was very detrimental to the Roman See."

*5. The Reformation as an Antipapal Movement **

Whatever may have been the reasons that induced Luther and other Reformation leaders to rebellion, and whatever the political forces which rapidly put it into motion severing half of Europe from the Catholic Church, it is certain that hatred of the pope, the struggle to the finish against papal primacy and the denial of any legitimacy to the historical or juridical

* Perhaps not many are familiar with the humble and sincere declaration of the self-accusing pontiff, Adrian VI, relative to the cause and responsibility of the Lutheran Reformation. Through his personal legate at the Diet of Nuremberg, in 1523, he stated that the Church of Rome and the popes were primarily responsible for the many evils that had befallen the Church. It was unfortunate that his tenure of office lasted but a short time, as he was in great earnest with regard to the Church's reform, of which he clearly saw the great need.

Paul III, his successor, made similar statements; and in the plan of reform which he finally set in motion, he proposed that the work of reform was to start in Rome, in the pontifical court and the curia.

These and other facts now easily accessible prove that the popes, some of them at least, were fully conscious of their responsibility for the rise of the Lutheran revolt. But they would not—in fact, they could not—accept a movement of reform that threatened to destroy the very principle of pontifical authority, even though they did not hesitate to condemn some papal actions or the lack of them.—Translator's note.

titles of the bishop of Rome constituted the principal elements of dissension and characterized Protestantism among the various Christian heresies. Today, it does not seem possible that men, lacking neither culture nor religious sense, like those who led in the Reformation, could nurture so much bitterness and would use such vulgar expressions against the successor of Peter. However, the objective historian must take note of these attitudes and find in them the origin of many subsequent situations, misunderstandings and resistance, from which so much damage came to world civilization. Epithets such as "most infernal father," "donkey pope," "desperate rascal," "apostle of the devil" and so forth are recurrent in every page of Luther's writings. One of his histories of the papacy is titled *The Mystery of Iniquity*, and some other of his declarations sound like this: "Look how my flesh and blood tremble! How my spirit desires to see the pope punished, and no temporal punishment is sufficient to do it! . . . I have attacked the doctrine of the papacy, I have torn out his heart; I do not think that the pope will rise again." There was no legend however absurd, no repugnant fable to which he did not lend faith and which he did not divulge in order to place his mortal enemy in a bad light. Following Luther's example, the Centuriators of Magdeburg reshaped the whole history of the Church from the viewpoint of alleged papal usurpations and with an abundance of sensational details.

In the heap of calumnies and insults, we are able to capture the fundamental idea of Protestants on the matter, which is that of identifying the pope with the Antichrist, holding him responsible for falsifying Christian doctrine, and considering him a product of the devil. The Catholic polemicists had to reply to such new accusations, and insisted more than ever on fundamental scriptural texts and on the legality of papal power. But their voices were for the moment drowned out by the clashing

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of arms, as it were. A few years after Luther's contemptuous burning of the bull of Leo X in the presence of large crowds, the city of Rome was sacked by fanatical followers of Charles de Bourbon, almost all Protestants, who had hoped to kill the pope and bury Catholicism once and for all. It was a supreme outrage, the sign of the end of an era and of the failure of a way of life that was all too worldly. Immediately after, the upward surge began, and, while political authorities were still trying to reach a compromise with the rebels, the Church, having found within herself the strength for a true and far-reaching reform, rallied around the pope.

The Fullness of Supreme Power

1. The Centralization of Power and the Triumph of Papal Infallibility

The fact that the papacy was able to recover from the moral debasement of the era of Alexander VI, the superficiality of Leo X and the political intrigues of Clement VII (1522–34), and even rise to religious fervor, to austerity and full awareness of its obligations, seems to defy explanation. This phenomenon will seem even more inexplicable if one looks at this period of history only from external factors, ignoring both the sources from which the papal institution derives its strength and the goal toward which its activities are directed. Following the various stages of the transition, we shall see how hard and long was the road to travel. But we shall also notice that the various episodes converged solely toward the clear triumph of the Roman primacy and paved the way to an eventual dogmatic definition of papal infallibility.

2. The Papacy and the Catholic Restoration

After the outbreak of the Protestant revolt, it seemed for a

few years as if an understanding between the two sides could still be reached, in spite of the violence of the accusations made by the Reformers. However, the feeling of optimism gave way to the bleak reality of a complete break at the conclusion of the Diet of Schmalkalden, which Luther closed with these terrible words: "May God fill you with hate against the pope!" It was natural that, on the Catholic side, appropriate defensive measures should be taken. In fact, after 1540, as a result of the strengthening of organizational ties and an increase of authority in the directing organs, the movement of Catholic reform took a new turn. The Roman Inquisition and the Index of forbidden books are the most typical manifestations of the new attitude. However, the principal change consisted in the decisive assumption by the popes of the leadership of the movement. In the face of greater danger, the papacy found itself and became the source of new energies. In the political field, setbacks favoring the relinquishing of temporal interests were not lacking. In the religious field, instead, there was no genuine act of reform that did not receive from Rome approval and encouragement. Yet, even among Catholics, it was not easy to accept the new trend, and a decisive clash between the two tendencies took place at the Council of Trent. As is well known, the preparation of the council was very long and was influenced by the political interests of Emperor Charles V and of Francis I, King of France. However, in the course of the preliminary work new difficulties arose which were very closely related to ecclesiastical life. In fact, the attitude taken by the participants in the Councils of Constance and of Basle was still too vividly remembered not to arouse the curia's great distrust of a contemplated convocation of a new council. On the other hand, lack of faith in the capacity for self-reform on the part of the papacy was in those days so widespread that no one believed a movement initiated by Rome could bear fruit. Even after the

opening of the council (in December 1545, under the pontificate of Paul III), there remained some hesitation. It was, above all, during the time of Pope Paul IV (Gian Pietro Carafa, 1555–59) that the conciliarist tendencies were decisively placed in check with the adoption of a series of Draconian provisions issued by the central authority. Equilibrium was re-established by Pius IV (Gian Angelo Medici of Milan) and, in 1563, after twenty-five general sessions, the great assembly was finally closed. It is not our task here to eulogize this great conclave of Christianity (indeed, one of the main walls of the ecclesiastical edifice) through whose discussions and carefully elaborated plans the authentic mind of the Catholic Church on all matters of faith and discipline was clearly determined. What seems more important, instead, is the mind of the fathers of the council with regard to both papal primacy and the relations between the pope and the bishops taken individually or united in a council.

3. *The Council of Trent*

The recognition of the pope as Vicar of Christ was unanimous at Trent, and even the title of *rector at moderator totius ecclesiae*, head and moderator of the entire Church, met with no difficulty. However, a formal decision regarding the primacy was not promulgated, in view of the opposition of the French representatives, who did not wish to give up what they considered as their "conquests" obtained at Constance. Even the procedure used in the works of the Tridentine assembly—that is, the constant referring to Rome for the solution of the most delicate cases, the request of papal approval of the decrees issued, and the like—demonstrated that, in practice, the principle of papal superiority was admitted and even sought as the only remedy in the difficulties encountered and as the most

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effective instrument for their solution. There was only one opposing vote when, at the conclusion of the work, the question, whether papal approval of the council's decisions should be sought, was brought up. This meant that, without superior approval, all the work carried on would have been without value. Pius IV, in turn, in approving and promulgating the council's decrees, ordered that all should consult Rome for the exact interpretation of them. To this effect he instituted a permanent commission of cardinals endowed with ample powers. It was also the responsibility of the popes to publish a list of forbidden books, the catechism, the liturgical books to be used, and the like. In this way, they became more and more decidedly the guardians and interpreters of truth, having all Catholic activities under their supervision.

However, another point formed the object of lively disputes at Trent, and this time the Spaniards were the leaders of the opposition. It concerned the so-called "divine right" of the bishops—the principle, that is, which held that episcopal jurisdiction derived directly from God as opposed to the other principle which maintained that it derived from the pope. Even here, political factors, national ambition and economic interests lay behind the attitude of the opposition. All secondary issues put aside, the fact remains that after ten months of discussions, no formula was found that would please everyone; and, in the final drafting of the acts, no mention was made of such jurisdiction and its source. It should be pointed out that, although a few papal canonists were steadfast in proclaiming that only Peter was constituted bishop and, consequently, all power is contained in his episcopacy and in that of his successors, Pope Pius IV was more tolerant and respectful of the opinions of others and, dreading to see the very urgent work of reform fail, renounced what would have been an affirmation of his prestige. Nevertheless, there resulted a no-

table enhancement in the prestige of the Holy See, and even the doctrine of the primacy made great strides, despite the feeling that the time for a dogmatic definition had not yet come. The unity of the Church, the only salvation in the face of many disintegrating forces, could not rest firmly except on papal supremacy; and its monarchical constitution, under the wise and energetic guidance of the bishop of Rome, was the granite structure that prevented any serious disintegration of Catholicism.

In order to carry out the tasks outlined by the Council of Trent and to contain within proper bounds the dangerous innovations arising on every side, the papacy of the Counter Reformation promoted a variety of projects and put into action the most appropriate instruments. These latter were the various Roman congregations, the offices of the curia were geared to the momentous tasks, with some new ones organized—such as the Secretariate of State, destined to have, in time, an exceptional development and importance; and also a vast net of diplomatic representatives, called nuncios. These were to carry the voice of the pope into all European countries and act as vigilant observers of the life of the various peoples in the interest of Catholicism and in the defense and propagation of the faith. As to the projects, they were such and so many that they cannot be listed here. However, it is important to underline once more their papal character and the fact that, without that central powerhouse, the whole of the resultive ecclesiastical life was inconceivable. Even the numerous religious orders that arose in the sixteenth century considered obedience to the pope as their special point of honor.

All the popes of this period, from Pius V (Ghisleri, 1566–72) to Gregory XIII (Buoncompagni, †1582), from Sixtus V (Peretti, †1590) to Clement VIII (Aldobrandini, 1592–1605), were by nature “builders and rulers.” But they were, above all,

men of piety, as Ranke, a Protestant historian, well recognized. He gave this description of Pius V: "The people were deeply moved when they saw that saintly pontiff barefoot, his head uncovered, his face radiant, with the ineffable expression of an extraordinary and profound faith. They reacted as though there had never before existed a pope as pious as he, and they took special delight in relating that his glance alone had converted heretics."

Under the energetic action of revival by these popes, the decrees of the Council of Trent were accepted and applied in all nations and dioceses, in spite of the opposition from sovereigns (various states obstructed their publication for decades or accepted it conditionally—that is, "without prejudice to the rights of the crown") and ecclesiastics. The *visitatio liminum Apostolorum*, visitation of the tomb of the Apostles, kept the bishops in regular contact with the Vicar of Christ and gave a harmonious and firm consistency to all ecclesiastical life. Meanwhile Rome herself had taken on a new appearance and "in its art was reflected in an admirable way the sense of orthodoxy and universality that the revived faith had restored. If the dream of Julius II for earthly greatness obtained a potent expression of reality in the Moses by Michelangelo, later the cupola of St. Peter and the colonnade exalted the majesty of the Church; from its spires arose a feeling of victory, a certainty of being the depositaries of the true faith, the light of beauty and the aura of religion" (Pontieri). However, the accomplishments of the papacy were not confined to faith and art, but reached every phase of Italian life, because the spirit of the nation had found in the Roman Church the realization of its fundamental needs. Rightfully, therefore, Pontieri concluded his important research, recognizing that in that crucial moment for civilization the function performed by the papacy was decisive, and also that to the papacy goes the

incontestable merit of having saved the religious unity of the Italian nation in a century that had been the forerunner of many misfortunes. It was such a Catholic moral unity that, later, Italy was able to make the premisses of its *Risorgimento*.

The vast and beneficent papal activities in the second half of the sixteenth century were enhanced by a blossoming of writings by theologians and canonists, who, using earlier elaborations, gave to the doctrine almost definitive form, concerning both the powers and the functions of the pope inside the Church and his relations with political authorities. This theological defense was all the more important and urgent since the old arguments (the theory of the two swords, etc.) or the traditional justificative reasons (the donation of Constantine) had been superseded by more recent critical studies or had proved inadmissible. On the contrary, many still considered as genuine various texts of the decretals which lacked authenticity and some alleged historical sources which were the fruit of later falsifications. However, the substance of the arguments in favor of papal rights did not rest on them, but on the prerogative of infallibility and the fullness of power. With regard to infallibility, the major held that it was a certainty rather than a truth of faith, and they thought it absurd to make a distinction between the inerrancy of the Church and the defectibility of the popes. If Peter, they observed, deserved great praise from Christ because he was faithful—that is, because he had a pure faith—*non potest unquam Petrus a fide deficere*, “Peter’s faith cannot fail,” and his successors must likewise be indefectible and will never teach anything against the truth. From this follows also their stand with regard to the other point; namely, that the pope possesses *supremum et absolutissimum iudicium*, supreme and absolute power of decision, and it cannot be that he is only the ministerial head of the Church, though it did belong to the council to define all matters of

faith. Nor was it believed that the popes had to consult with a council before making definite decisions on such matters, because *Petri et successorum eius est privilegium indefectibilis fidei*, "it is a privilege of Peter and of his successors to have an unerring faith." Instead, limitations were placed on papal power in political matters, and there were those who openly recognized that all that had been written in favor of the theocracy was *merum commentum in adulationem pontificum*, "mere remarks in adulation of the popes." This summarizes the thought of De Vio, of his Dominican brothers Francisco de Vittoria, Dominic Soto, Melchior Cano, as well as of Stapleton, Pighi, Macedo and Francisco Suárez of the Society of Jesus (†1617). However, the most important author of this period is, without a doubt, Cardinal Robert Bellarmine (†1621) of the Society of Jesus, to whom particular attention must be given. But we shall first make a brief mention of Francis de Sales, Bishop of Geneva. Through actual experience in governing, more than by elaborate reasoning, he saw the function of the pope as irreplaceable and exalted him with sober but warm words of devoted affection. In his controversies with the Protestants among whom he lived, he always drew on texts from the gospel and from the fathers on which was based the recognition of the "Roman See as the rock upon which rests the Church, the true sheepfold of the flock of Christ."

According to Bellarmine, the Church is a visible and a hierarchical society with a monarchical constitution, tempered by aristocratic elements. In fact, Peter is the only head and the supreme pastor; yet the various bishops are not only his vicars, but occupy their places by divine right, even though through the mediation of the pope. The duties of the pope consist essentially in teaching and in judging without appeal in all questions concerning faith and morals, and in governing the

Church. In exercising the first function, that of teacher, the pope enjoys the privilege of infallibility, which does not mean that he enjoys special revelations or that he is impeccable. It does not even imply that he cannot err when he speaks as a private person or when he passes judgment on questions of fact. His functions as head of the ecclesiastical government carry with them the fullness of ecclesiastical jurisdiction, superiority over councils and a sovereign power over the faithful, similar to that of kings over their subjects. Yet Christians must always believe in the principle that it is better to serve God than men, and that if they were commanded to do things manifestly unjust, they could refuse obedience.

From this, Bellarmine drew an important conclusion concerning the pope's authority in temporal matters and his position in respect to civil political jurisdiction. Having accepted without question the distinction between the two societies and, therefore, between their supreme duties, he affirms that the popes do not enjoy any direct power over sovereigns but only an indirect faculty of intervention which implies the right to admonish, to censure and, in extreme cases, to excommunicate the guilty ones. In order to have perfect independence of action in his own field, the pope must also be free from temporal jurisdictions, and Bellarmine vindicates for the bishop of Rome the privilege of a total immunity in the political order, stating that in the first centuries also they had the right not to be anyone's subject, even though they were subjects of the Roman or the Byzantine emperors.

The Bellarmine stand in matters of papal powers was too well balanced to be favorably accepted in a time when the curialists on one side and the royalists on the other still doggedly defended their respective theories, but ultimately it has prevailed in the current doctrine of Catholic theology.

4. *Gallican Controversies — Febronianism — The Decline of the Papacy in the Seventeenth Century*

Far less favorable were the successes obtained by the papacy in the political field at the same time that the pope was widely recognized as pastor and teacher of the faithful. The possibilities of papal direction of the political life of Europe had definitely waned earlier (Pius V was the last medieval pope in this sense; in fact, he excommunicated Queen Elizabeth of England because she was a heretic, and he promoted a league of Catholic states against the infidel Turks), Sixtus and his successors were able successfully to apply their activities to the development of international relations. In dealing with civil powers they adhered to two fundamental principles: 1) To enter into alliances only with those who could be trusted to defend the Catholic cause; 2) To save the independence of the Holy See by not submitting to any too powerful lord, but wisely balancing the opposite forces. Thus, if Spain was the standard bearer of Counter Reformation, the conversion of Henry IV of Bourbon was well received by Clement VIII and, to a certain point, even facilitated in order to create a counterpoise against Spanish aggressiveness. However, with the outbreak of the Thirty Years' War, and its conclusion with the Treaty of Westphalia (1648) which consecrated the definite division of Christian Europe into two spheres of different confessions, the political position of the papacy became of secondary importance, and all its protests were in vain, since its counsels almost always went unheeded. In place of the European political organization, which, up to the present, had at least in theory, been unitary and converged toward the pope, an organization arose which rested on the balance of the great powers. This obviously excluded the pope both as head of the Church as well as sovereign of a small state. Moreover,

the principle of secularization of ecclesiastical property which then became officially recognized struck at the basis of papal rights regarding his temporal powers and opened the way to future spoliation. In this atmosphere, the popes turned with increasing zeal to pastoral activities and apostolic ministry, in keeping with the general direction assumed by Catholicism following the Council of Trent. However, papal diplomacy remained always vigilant and was often extremely alert in calling attention to problems. It openly opposed the exaggerated demands of the "most Christian" kings, reacted against injustices, such as the establishment of new Protestant kingdoms, showed tolerance toward the errant, even when the sovereigns, in the interest of their own states, wanted to use more severe measures of discipline (as happened during the Spanish Inquisition or after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, by Louis XIV). Above all, the papacy showed a very active interest in the triumph of the Catholic cause in Europe and outside. In this regard, it may suffice to mention the difficult work of Pius V for a league of Spain and the Italian states (overcoming their respective peculiarities, rivalries and mutual distrust) in order to place them at the service of a cause that was the concern of the entire Christian civilization of Europe. In the face of the Turkish threat, a warm appeal by the pope evoked forth waves of enthusiasm and brought about the victory at Lepanto (1571). A century later, in the outskirts of Vienna, another great battle was fought against the same enemies of the faith and of European traditions (1685), and then also the popes gave effective financial aid and their prayers.

However, alongside of these unquestioned accomplishments, the Holy See had to submit to humiliations and compromises, renounce its rights in some cases and give in to obstinate demands. The popes were no longer free, not even in the exercise of their religious jurisdiction, and they had no material

power to defend their territorial independence. Royal absolutism, having increasingly asserted itself, did everything to exclude papal intervention from state affairs, thus limiting the sphere of influence of the greatest religious authority. The most serious consequence of the triumph of royalism was so-called "Gallicanism," a movement directed to the forming of national churches. These, evidently, were contrary to the "catholic" spirit and hostile to papal supremacy inasmuch as the latter represented a bond that went beyond the restricted circle of the individual state. Not that the Gallicans denied the existence of the primacy itself, but they so limited its exercise and so misunderstood its nature as to fall into error. Before this heresy became widespread, the bishops of France, clearly acknowledging the constant tradition of the Church to refer to the Holy See cases concerning the faith, wrote to Innocent X requesting a clear and definite statement on Jansenism. After the condemnation of the famous book *Augustinus*, they thanked the pope *cuius ore Petrus locutus est*, "through whose mouth Peter has spoken," and assured him of their complete submission. However, it was during the period of the Jansenists and on account of their subtle action that controversies regarding papal power started again. At the end of the sixteenth century, Pierre Pithou, a favorite of Henry IV, had written a book entitled *Les libertés de l'église gallicane*, "The Liberties of the Gallican Church."

In 1625, Antonio Santarelli, of the Society of Jesus, exaggerated in the opposite direction, expounding the fullness of papal power even in the political field. The French parliament was so incensed at this that it enacted a decree ordering that the book be burned and that all Jesuits sign a recognition of the superiority of king over pope in political matters. In 1641, the canonist, Pierre de Marca, commissioned by Richelieu, wrote a book entitled *De concordia sacerdotii et imperii seu*

de libertatibus ecclesiae gallicanae, in which he defended a moderate form of Jansenism which was still contrary to the undeniable prerogatives of the Holy See. In 1663, a violent controversy was resumed around the theory held by the young Drauet de Villeneuve. The Sorbonne not only forbade its professors to accept his opinions, but declared that the pope is not infallible or superior to the council. The controversy reached its climax when political motives entered into it as a result of meddling by Louis XIV, with his unrestrained pride, his absolute lack of respect toward the popes, and his contempt for even the most elementary norms of diplomacy.

There were at that time in France assemblies of the clergy who were not engaged in religious activities but acted as courts of assize for one of the social orders of the kingdom. They constituted the most helpful instruments for maneuvers against Rome despite the fact that, by right, they had no competence in matters of papal powers and related subjects. When, in 1689, one such group criticized the conduct of the Holy See toward the king and restated the absolute dedication of the clergy to the sovereign, Innocent XI (Odescalchi, 1676–89) protested. A small assembly composed of thirty-four bishops and an equal number of ecclesiastics was convened in extraordinary session. Outstanding among them were the Archbishop of Paris, who was very loyal to the court, and the Bishop of Meaux, Bénigne Bossuet, the famous orator and scholar. On March 19, 1682, a declaration consisting of four main articles, drafted by Bossuet, was voted on. In it the validity of the decrees of the Council of Constance about the superiority of a council was expressly upheld and the exercise of papal authority was limited on the basis of the canons of the Gallican Church. Even the limits of papal infallibility were very much restricted, although Bossuet had succeeded in checking the most rabid Gallicans, thus avoiding open schism. King Louis, natu-

rally, was very pleased and hastened to have the articles registered, ordering that they be publicized in schools, seminaries, and other places. This, of course, was in contrast with the attitude of the participants in the assembly, who had not intended to proclaim a doctrine but only to express an opinion. In turn, the pope complained very strongly but did not condemn the articles, although he refused to elevate to the bishopric some of the prelates of the assembly. His successor, Alexander VIII (Ottoboni 1689–91), shortly before his death, issued a constitution in which he declared void the articles and the royal confirmation of them, although he did not declare the articles of 1682 dogmatically false. It was only with Innocent XII (Pignatelli, †1700) that Louis XIV, having found himself in political difficulties, finally came to an agreement. The participants in the assembly wrote a letter of apology, which was really not too clear, and the candidates to the bishopric formally committed themselves not to follow the Gallican theories.

The principal argument of Bossuet was: *in dubiis libertas*, "in doubtful things, freedom"—that is, papal infallibility was still a question *sub iudice* and, as such, it could be discussed. In his opinion, the Holy See possessed the prerogative of indefectibility, which is something different since it admits the possibility of error, but it also postulates a successive correction. The Gallican infiltrations continued for a long time, mainly in the French environment (echoes of it could be heard from theologians such as Serry and historians such as Tillemont and Fleury), despite the fact that the popes had undoubtedly obtained a moral victory over the clergy as well as over the sovereign.

With the narration of the events regarding Gallicanism, we have entered into the eighteenth century, which is perhaps the most unpleasant period in papal history. In fact, if in other times hostilities were more open, difficulties greater, and the

moral decline more brazen, in this period, pride, which is a consciousness of one's own dignity, seemed to have waned, and the spirit of papal action in general was a far cry from the apostolic courage of other times and contrary to the Roman tradition. It must also be stated that the popes were operating in a hostile atmosphere, one in which they saw the very foundations of revealed religion (of which they were the custodians and the interpreters) undermined by the ever-spreading rationalistic spirit. In the name of a purely natural light, rationalism threatened to uproot the very principles of Christianity. It was the decisive crisis of modern civilization. At a certain moment it even seemed as though the revolutionary forces had overrun all resistance, and their spirit had spread in all fields of culture and of practical living. In the long run, however, it was the popes who won the victory. By their defense of the authority of the law and of the universal validity of morals they were able to save even civil society. But with this statement we have over-run the chronological order of the century under study.

Going back to the seventeenth century, we must say that in the face of the demands made by civil sovereigns, the popes went to the farthest limits of concession and gave them the faculty to proceed in the nomination of bishops or to express their *placet* and *exequatur* with regard to papal dispositions in religious as well as in disciplinary matters. Those "Catholic" or "most Christian kings," as they were called, went even further and exacted from the popes a very great sacrifice in the suppression (by Clement XIV, on July 21, 1773, with the Brief *Dominus ac Redemptor*) of the Company of Jesus, the most efficient and loyal organization at the service of the Holy See.

Other requests regarding jurisdictional matters and cult were also advanced by the courts. They were based on theories expressed by a learned and pious priest, himself an advocate of an exaggerated episcopalism, and too willing to recognize the

rights of civil powers to the detriment of ecclesiastical rights, particularly papal primacy. He was one John Nicholas von Hontheim, who, in 1763, wrote in Latin *The Book of Justin Febronius on the State of the Church and the Rightful Power of the Roman Pontiff, Written to Reunite Dissident Christians*. From this book comes the name of the movement—"Febronianism." It was also called "Josephinism," because, if all sovereigns of that period were more or less against the doctrinal powers of the popes, Emperor Joseph II excelled in such intemperate zeal as to deserve in mockery the name of sacristan. In reality, however, he behaved more like a lord than a respectful servant in the House of God. In Febronius' book the pope's primacy of jurisdiction is opposed and he is granted only a primacy of honor, with authority over the bishops as first among equals, not a superiority over the episcopate taken collectively. It is in the episcopate, Febronius held, that the supreme authority of the Church lies. The purpose of the whole book is a re-evaluation of the divine and inalienable powers of the bishops; and it shows the influence of the historical studies of the time on the primitive constitution of the Church. Furthermore, it stated that it was the duty of the state to correct the Church from the deviations into which it had strayed. The work made an enormous impression in Europe and saw many translations. It was, however, placed on the Index and thoroughly confuted. Later the author retracted it, although his ideas had already made much headway and had many followers—among them, a teacher of law in Vienna, Paul Joseph von Riegger, who exercised much influence on Maria Theresa, in spite of protests by the Austrian bishops.

At the instigation of the minister, Prince Kaunitz, the imperial government applied the Febronian theories in many ways, prohibiting communications between the bishops and the Holy See as well as the sending of money outside the frontiers,

introducing unauthorized liturgical books, and imposing many limitations upon members of every religious order. In vain Pius VI (Gianangelo Braschi, 1775–99) travelled from Rome to Vienna (1792) to effect a change of mind in the sovereign. The pope was given many outward demonstrations of deference, but no concessions of consequence. Meanwhile, other Febronian movements arose here and there, so as to endanger the solidarity of the Catholic Church. In the middle of 1786, representatives of the archbishops of Cologne, Trier, Mainz and Salzburg convened at Ems to discuss questions of interest to the German church. All were agreed in opposing cases reserved to the pope, to papal nuncios, and the like. Then, turning to the emperor, they requested him to “liberate forever the German nation from every oppression.” In this case, however, Joseph II was very evasive, since he held as belonging to the state the rights which the bishops were now vindicating for themselves as belonging to them by divine right. With a brief of November 14, 1789, the pope condemned the action of the rebels.

In Italy, too, there were dangerous displays of episcopalism, mixed with Jansenistic ideas, which were upheld by the state as an antagonistic move against Rome. We shall mention one Scipio de’Ricci and his synod of Pistoia (1786), at which various deliberations similar to those already mentioned were enacted. Naturally, papal condemnations were not lacking, nor replies from orthodox polemicists, but it would be too long to report them here. Their basic doctrine was the same; but, before the growing tide of antipapal hostilities, all the wonderful arguments brought out by them proved useless. The sovereigns acted like lords in religious matters while scholars pretended to be defenders of abstract principles of tolerance but were in reality anticlericals. The people tried to profit from this situation, invading ecclesiastical possessions or evading payment

of tributes and other taxes. The clergy, on the whole, behaved rather honorably, but the confusion was great and everywhere enthusiasm for the faith was almost extinct.

5. From the French Revolution to the "Roman Question"

The end of the century brought upon the pontiffs the most degrading humiliations. In the Civil Constitution for the Clergy promulgated by the French Constituent Assembly in 1790, were summed up the prejudices and rancors against the papacy imbedded in France for centuries. Gallican ideas found their way into the Napoleonic Concordat of 1801, through the Organic Articles included in it by force after the conclusion of the very trying negotiations between Bonaparte and Cardinal Consalvi. Nevertheless, in spite of so many humiliations and trials, it was just at that time that the papacy was beginning to rise in the general esteem and to enjoy the respect of the clergy, as the result of a series of strong acts of authority. Typical was the action of Pius VII, who asked the entire French episcopacy to submit their resignation in order to be successively reinstated by him, letting it be known that if they refused, he would ignore the will of the individual and depose the titulars from their sees. As to papal prestige, everyone will agree that the incident of the aged Pius VI torn away from Rome and dragged off to prison made an enormously favorable impression (he died at Valence). The same must be said with regard to the action of the sickly Pius VII, who, alone among those in power, dared to stand up to the lord of Europe! Napoleon understood it well, as he preferred to deal in religious matters with the pope only, rather than make laws arbitrarily, as the revolutionaries had done. He also accepted the principle of hierarchical unity, which meant a splendid victory for the pope

over Gallican tendencies. Moreover, he asked the pope to preside at his coronation. We must not overlook the fact that, in spite of all, the sweet but inflexible personality of Pius VII exercised a fascination upon the French emperor.

The trials endured by the Catholic Church in general, and by the papacy in particular, at the beginning of the nineteenth century were so serious as to make many think that the end of the Church was near, since she would be incapable of survival in a world so changed and so hostile. And yet, that period must be considered rather the beginning of a new historical cycle, not worse than the preceding ones and, under many aspects, one in which the exercise of the religious mission of the Church was definitely enhanced. In fact, we have seen that in the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries many restrictions were placed upon ecclesiastical liberty, and papal influence was cut down in every way. The greater part of the innovations of the nineteenth century, on the contrary, were instrumental (perhaps against the intentions of those who introduced them) in rendering more effective the action of the pope, more vast the results of his deeds, and more independent his policies.

Significant among other things was the fact that, though the papacy had lost many of its supporters who traditionally constituted its external protection, yet it stood firm and unweakened, gaining in unity and esteem. In the meanwhile, with the popes free of the old fetters, and the *placet* and the royal *exequatur* abolished, Rome could take command of her relations with the various churches, and make herself felt more immediately and more authoritatively. Furthermore, thanks to renewed apostolic zeal, the Catholic faith was now being carried to all parts of the world and was also being re-established in countries which had been exclusively Protestant before. Obviously, such activities would have been impossible without a coordinating center and a sure guide.

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In turn, with the secularization of society and the laicization of governments, with an immoral press and antireligious doctrines spread far and wide, the faithful and the clergy spontaneously rallied around the pope as their teacher and trusted protector. With the loss of privileges and possessions, ecclesiastics had been freed from charges not in keeping with their offices; and they now returned to their true superior, who defended and assisted them for no selfish motives. Any form of ecclesiastical Gallicanism was thus cut off to the advantage of a true ultramontanism. (This was a term much used at that time, which, more than a doctrine, indicated a method of action, a tactical necessity that was keenly felt.) A tighter control was necessary in order to form a common front in the face of the enemy. However, this could never have come about without a connection with a unifying principle, and this could be none other than the pope.

A first surge of religious renewal came immediately after the fall of Napoleon, during the so-called "Restoration." The zeal of the princes was perhaps not very sincere. (Cardinal Consalvi knew something of this, for he had to work very hard at the Congress of Vienna in order to have the pope's possessions restored.) However, by force of events, many states entered into agreements with the Holy See, and conditions were greatly improved as compared with the state of things during the seventeenth century. Still more favorable was the attitude of public opinion, aided also by the Romanticism then in vogue, which recalled the Christian achievements of the Middle Ages, and delighted in extolling the civil function of the popes.

A document characteristic of that historical moment is the work of Joseph de Maistre (1820), entitled *Du Pape*, "About the Pope," which is different from all the other books of apologetics dealing with the same subject in that it was written by a layman and was based less on theological and scriptural argu-

ments than on those from history and from reason. To the writer from Savoy, a very bitter enemy of the Revolution and a defender beyond measure of sovereign power, the papacy represented the anchor of every authority and the decisive factor in the changing of a social structure that was still organized along the lines of the old order. Aside from this, he brilliantly defended the Church from many foolish accusations. He was very sensitive to the problem of the return of non-Catholics to the fold and wrote considerably and in good literary style, although not always free of rhetorical elements, about the historical and ideological reasons favoring the civil power of the popes, and also about the necessity of a supreme and infallible office in the world, as postulated by the very nature of things.

De Maistre was not the only apologist of the papacy in the beginning of the nineteenth century. With him should be mentioned at least the Breton Abbé Felicité Robert de Lamennais, who, with his widely circulated books *La religion considérée dans ses rapports avec l'ordre politique et civil* (1825), "Religion Considered in its Relations with the Political and Civil Orders," and *Des progrès de la révolution et de la guerre contre l'Eglise* (1829), "About the Progress of the Revolution and the War against the Church," contributed to the elimination of Gallicanism by showing the danger of the enthrallment of religion to politics contained in the Gallican doctrine. Too zealous a defender, Lamennais, as so often happens in such cases, fell into the opposite extreme. In the meantime, in the lapse of a few years, the spiritual and the political conditions of Europe had radically changed: in place of absolutism, ideas and systems of liberal governments had become widespread. In consequence of their premises, they no longer protected the Church, but neither did they always allow her freedom to exist and to act, as consistency with their

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principles would have demanded. Catholics, on the other hand, availed themselves of the principles of freedom sponsored by their adversaries, to establish newspapers, organize parties and associations, and to hold public manifestations of faith such as congresses and the like. The popes condemned liberalism, not so much as a political system as for its philosophical doctrine, and looked with suspicion upon many other theories advanced in those years, which were so fertile with new ideas.

At this time the serious and delicate "Roman Question" emerged, concerning the existence of a papal state in the new Italian political order which was now forming as the result of the *Risorgimento* in the peninsula. If persons of good sense recognized that the pope, as head of a universal religion, could not be reduced to the condition of a citizen of a national state or a bishop of the court of a sovereign residing in Rome, opinions varied considerably as to the way the pope was to be assured of conditions of liberty and independence as a *conditio sine qua non* by which to obtain the obedience of the faithful the world over. On this point, a lively controversy developed in Italy and outside, especially in France, with the participation of lay and ecclesiastical elements. We shall mention the book by G. E. A. Gosselin entitled *Pouvoir du pape au Moyen Age*, "The Power of the Pope in the Middle Ages," published in 1845 and many times reprinted and translated, which offered ammunition to all the defenders of the pope-king theory. Montalembert and Dupanloup, Guizot and Thiers (to mention only the greater ones) also wrote on this subject.

Peculiar among English Catholics was the position of Lord John Emerich Acton, who criticized the bad clerical government and awaited from Providence a solution "through ways unknown to us," by means of which the independence of the Holy See could come about with methods other than those found necessary up to the present time. In turn, Pope Pius IX, in

allocutions and in writings, in public and in private, never missed an opportunity to emphasize the concept of the absolute necessity of maintaining a state for the Church if the independence of the pope was to be preserved. On the Italian side stand out the declarations of Cavour, Ricasoli, Minghetti, Buoncompagni and, in his own way, Manzoni. The enemies of religion, instead, were quick in assuming that with the loss of the pope's political independence, even the religious function of Catholicism would end because of the close relation existing between the exercise of the political independence of the pope and his spiritual duties. Thus, they hoped, an institution they considered an anachronistic medieval survival would vanish once and for all.

The attacks against papal sovereignty, the decline of prestige of the Holy See and all the other historical happenings of those years are too well known (and also too painful) to be recalled here. But they must not be forgotten, because they constituted—perhaps beyond the intentions of the individual protagonists—a decisive moment in the history of the papacy, a turning point filled with consequences, and the passage from one way of understanding and exercising the function of the pope to another.

With new ideas hostile to religion, with a political situation new and full of danger for the Holy See, with preoccupying symptoms of centrifugal tendencies among ecclesiastics (national churches in Germany, Mexico, Haiti, and elsewhere, insignificant in the number of participants, but dangerous as indications of a state of mind), there was enough to demand of the supreme authority that a definite stand be taken with which to make known its inflexibility in matters of principle and its insuperable opposition to any request that would imply encroachment upon the rights vindicated by it. The principal documents regarding this matter are, as everyone knows, the

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Syllabus, and the encyclical letter *Quanta cura* which accompanies it. They were published December 8, 1864.

In eighty propositions the errors of pantheism, naturalism and rationalism are reproved one by one, as are also those of socialism, secret societies and liberalism. At the end of the document, the principles of Christian morality are restated, and every possibility of a "secret" agreement between the Church and so-called "modern" secular civilization is excluded. The points which more directly concern papal primacy are many and they deal with the relations between Rome and the other bishops, the latitude of the political powers of the popes, the demands of the state regarding the activity of the clergy, and the like. An explicit act of papal authority is that which is contained in the closing section of the encyclical *Quanta cura*, where Pius IX declares: "In virtue of our apostolic authority, we reject, proscribe and condemn . . . all the individual opinions and perverse doctrines mentioned in this writing and we request and command that they be considered as rejected, proscribed and condemned" by all the children of the Catholic Church. Various states tried to obstruct the publication and circulation of the document, but Catholics protested in the name of liberty, demonstrating that it dealt with legitimate acts of papal jurisdiction.

With the *Syllabus*, however, the papacy accomplished only a defensive work, warning the faithful of the dangers which surrounded them. But more positive steps were necessary in order to give Catholic life a new stimulus and provide a dynamic center filled with a greater capacity for action and able to point out, in the general disorder, the road for the return of the new society to Christ. Pius IX, moreover, had taken on this task, prompted on the one hand by the gravity of the situation and on the other by the expansiveness of his character, his love for popularity, and his sensitiveness to the great manifestations of

devotion to his person. His activities were feverish, elaborate ceremonies were multiplied, writings followed without interruption. The moment had come to gather the fruits of the work of centuries and to set the position and duties of the papacy permanently in the heart of the Catholic Church, eliminating uncertainties, correcting errors and spurring on the good workers in the vineyard. Moreover, requests for final decisions were coming to the pope from bishops and laity, from councils and synods held in all the nations of the world. They were loud in proclaiming him teacher and light, judge and guide of all Christendom. The ultimate result of this was, as is known, the proclamation of papal infallibility. So decisive and binding was the effect of this act that a slight disorientation was registered in the Catholic camp itself, while adversaries indulged in loud protests and denunciations. According to Bismarck, the new dogma represented a permanent threat to the independence of the states. And yet, papal infallibility was but the inevitable conclusion of the long struggles for the primacy of the bishop of Rome, the successes registered by the doctrine of papal superiority over the councils, and the Catholic unity established at Trent against Protestant individualism. The proclamation consecrated, as it were, with utter solemnity the incontestable firmness of an authority that speaks in the name of God, at a time when anarchy and self-will seemed to be triumphant.

6. The Vatican Council and the Definition of Papal Infallibility

Ever since 1865, a special commission of Roman theologians had attended to the preparation of the work of the coming council and discussed the subjects to be dealt with. On June 26, 1868, Pope Pius IX promulgated the bull with which he an-

nounced the First Vatican Council, setting the opening date on December 8, 1869. An invitation was extended also to the Eastern and the Protestant Churches, but not to Catholic sovereigns. The general conditions in Europe, particularly in the Papal States, were very much disturbed at the time, nor did the announcement of the coming council improve the situation. The civil governments used all the means at their disposal to hamper its realization. Masonry organized an anticouncil of free thinkers, held at the same time in Naples. In spite of this, more than seven hundred participants attended at the Vatican, coming from the farthest places, such as Asia, Africa and Australia. We shall not follow all the works of the council, but shall limit ourselves to the definition of the powers of the pope and of papal infallibility.

The plan to set up a bulwark against rampant rationalism, by proclaiming that no individual reason is infallible, but only a religious authority when it speaks with assistance from the Divine Spirit, was highly acceptable to large sections in the Catholic clergy. Others, equally pious and in good faith, saw instead the negative effect of such a decision—that is, the grave shock it would cause in the intellectual circles and the hostility with which it would be received by the civil governments. Thus, despite the fact that the preparatory commission had been unanimous in admitting the possibility of defining papal infallibility as a dogma, yet the question was not scheduled for the council. However, there were in the assembly two strongly contrasting currents in a struggle to gain control. At the end of January, the Armenian Patriarch Hassun and Archbishop Ledochowski of Posen sent the pope a memorandum with three hundred and eighty signatures asking him to define the doctrine of papal infallibility as a dogma of faith. In turn, Cardinal Schwarzenberg of Prague sent another memorandum with the signatures of three hundred and thirty-six German,

French and North American bishops asking him not to define it. At this point the subject was temporarily set aside, but when the council turned to discussing the constitution of the Church and, therefore, of the place occupied in it by the Roman pontiff, the subject of papal infallibility came up again.

The general discussion, begun in the middle of May, went on for fifty days and became a real oratorical tourney in which all expressed their opinions. The various views were presented with the support of much evidence and the assistance of profound exegesis. If it is true that curial pressure was not lacking, it is also true that every possible means was used to throw light on the problem. Though the preparatory work had been meticulous and detailed, yet not every objection was disposed of successfully. On July 17, 1870, with the pope's permission, fifty-five American and German bishops left Rome after having declared in writing that they could not at the moment adhere to the definition of infallibility, since the time seemed inopportune to them. However, they pledged compliance with the council's decisions. Thus, the way having been cleared of opposing elements, on July 18, the constitution *Pastor aeternus*, consisting of four articles, was submitted in plenary session. The first article deals with the nature of the primacy of Peter; the second explains its perpetuity in his successors; the third sets forth the powers of the pope over Christianity and the hierarchy; the fourth defines the *magisterium* of the pope as being infallible, within certain conditions which it enunciates. When the vote was taken, the results were five hundred and thirty-three in favor, two against (a Sicilian bishop and a North American bishop, both of whom soon afterwards concurred), and the pope immediately promulgated the act. The proclamation was received with solemn acclamations to Pius IX, but it was also the swan song of the council. The outbreak of the Franco-Prussian War and the entrance of the Italian troops into the

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Papal States forced the pope to dissolve the assembly, postponing *sine die* the continuation of the council, which to this day has been neither resumed nor closed. Due to the exceptional importance of the text, it may not be out of place to report it here with a certain completeness, because this document sets forth the nature, the object and the way in which the infallible papal power is exercised: "Hence we teach and declare that by the disposition of the Lord the Roman Church possesses a superiority of ordinary power over all other Churches, and that this power of jurisdiction of the Roman Pontiff, which is truly episcopal, is immediate; to which all, of whatever rite and dignity, both pastors and faithful, both individually and collectively, are bound, by their duty to hierarchical subordination and true obedience, to submit not only in matters which belong to faith and morals but also in those that appertain to the discipline and government of the Church throughout the world, so that the Church of Christ may be one flock under one supreme pastor, through the preservation of unity both of communion and of profession of the same faith with the Roman Pontiff. . . . But so far is this power of the Supreme Pontiff from being any prejudice to the ordinary and immediate power of episcopal jurisdiction, by which Bishops, who have been set by the Holy Spirit to succeed and hold the place of the Apostles, feed and govern each his own flock as true pastors, that this, their episcopal authority, is really asserted, strengthened and protected by the supreme and universal Pastor. . . . Therefore, faithfully adhering to the tradition received from the beginning of the Christian faith, for the glory of God, our Saviour, the exaltation of the Catholic religion, and the salvation of Christian people, the Sacred Council approving, we teach and define that it is a dogma divinely revealed, that the Roman Pontiff when he speaks *ex cathedra*, that is, when in the discharge of the office of Pastor and Teacher of

all Christians, by virtue of his supreme Apostolic authority he defines a doctrine regarding faith or morals to be held by the Universal Church, by the divine assistance promised to him in blessed Peter, is possessed of that infallibility with which the Divine Redeemer willed that His Church should be endowed for defining doctrine regarding faith and morals: and that therefore such definitions of the Roman Pontiff are irreformable of themselves, and not from the consent of the Church. But, if anyone, which may God avert, presume to contradict this our definition, let him be anathema."

Paraphrasing, we may say that the papal magisterium is absolutely independent of the councils or other approvals of the Church. Infallibility flows from the promise of divine assistance and regards only the truths with which the pope deals in the fullness of his apostolic power—that is, when he deals with a doctrinal judgment, explicit and final, and in matters concerning faith and morals. Thus, for example, the doctrinal decrees of the Roman congregations, even if provided with papal approval, do not enjoy the privilege of infallibility; neither do the discourses of the pope, except when they contain a true and proper definition, or when they require the universal assent of the faithful.

The decisions of the Vatican Council crowned the work of many centuries with a solemn declaration that put an end to all disputes concerning the latitude and the character of the pope's rights with regard to his spiritual authority. However, while this was taking place, the pope was losing the last remnants of his temporal power. Aside from any consideration of the practical consequences of this fact (as is known, good sense prevailed on both sides: on the part of the Italian government by not allowing the troops to cross the threshold of the papal palaces and by not raising any difficulty over the presence of foreign diplomatic representations at the Vatican; and on the

part of the Holy See, by paying no attention to those who suggested that it leave Rome), we may pose the following question: Deprived of a territory subject to him, was the pope still a sovereign? And if so, what kind of sovereignty was his? Evidently, the same as before, in his capacity as head of the Church and spiritual ruler of millions of faithful all over the world. To the pope, and not to a sovereign of a small state, had the various governments sent and continued to send their representatives. As a center of a universal religion, the Vatican remained and still remains an observation post of the first order in international politics.

Thus, even the loss of the territorial state was not without rewards, and the tribulations borne with great dignity and fortitude by Pius IX became a source of benefits for his successors. The respect and the love of Catholics for the pope steadily grew, the attitude of separated brethren and unbelievers improved, religious fervor increased, and the hierarchical ties became stronger and rose above any interference by lay authorities. We would also have to mention the marvelous proofs of attachment to the popes given by so many people in the last eighty years and the magnificent example of moral rectitude and dignity exemplified by the incumbents of the highest office. Even the central offices of the ecclesiastical government have considerably improved their systems of work by the reorganization of offices and their duties, the widening of relations and by the use of the most modern scientific methods. The persistent opposition by the "old Catholics," led by Döllinger and encouraged by the governments that refused to recognize the dogma of infallibility, did not have much of a following and spent itself in a few small churches which attached themselves to the Jansenists still in existence here and there, while even the sporadic attempts made at creating national churches failed. Vaster and more dramatic, instead,

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was the clash with the advocates of "modernism," who, also on the question of papal powers, had advanced opinions condemned by the Church (in the decree *Lamentabili* of Pius X, 1907). But, once this new crisis had been overcome, the pope rose increasingly in the admiration of the faithful all over the world, and the Holy See became a very active center of Catholic life.

The Theology of Papal Primacy

The Church founded by Christ is a visible society, hierarchically organized. In the beginning, its centralistic constitution had its fulcrum in the person of Peter, to whom Christ gave the supreme power of government. With the death of the Apostle, the perpetuity of his office was successively assured by another "Living Peter"—that is, by the bishops of Rome, Peter's successors in office, who were united to him by the same relation which had united Peter to Christ, and who had received an identical fullness of power. Thus, the visible Christian community is governed at every moment by a transmissible primacy, which is the prerogative of teaching and governing given to the head of the apostles by an investiture of divine right. In view of its character, this prerogative never failed. Consequently, we must consider as the true Church of Christ only that in which this legitimate succession still exists and in which the other pastors are organically united with the pope, exercising their powers in unison with and in subordination to him.

It is true that the centralization was in a large measure the

product of circumstances; that is, in the face of danger and difficulties, which from time to time arose, decisions were made provisionally which later became permanent and were rendered more efficient by the popes. The principle, however, is an accepted part of tradition, and as such it justifies the various historical forms of centralization. The fundamental elements of this centralization are two: limitation of the authority of the local heads, which obliges them to have recourse to Rome even in the normal and current exercise of their duties; and a control regularly exercised by the Holy See on peripheral organs. The means by which this dual purpose is achieved are the Roman congregations, the offices of the curia, the nuncios, and many others. Thus, the Consistorial Congregation deals with the bishops and the secular clergy all over the world (its late cardinal secretary had a weekly audience with the pope), while another congregation presides over religious orders, societies and similar groups and binds to Rome all these great institutions, in spite of their great variety in rules and customs. Every five years, the bishops must send to the Holy See a report according to a form established in 1918, consisting of twelve points. Besides, within the same period, they are to make their *ad limina* visit. (It was Sixtus V who made this visit obligatory and regular, while before it was only a pious practice and did not apply to the whole world.)

Even the method of selecting bishops was radically modified with the new Code of Canon Law. Already reduced to a formality, or done away with, especially since benefices were given by the popes, from the early part of the thirteenth century, the old method of election was abrogated and replaced by a free selection made by the pope, or only rarely delegated to others as a special concession or by way of an exceptional privilege. With this system, it is not impossible that, before the selection, the heads of state could propose names or express their opinion

on a list of candidates, according to procedures set up in respective concordats concluded with the Holy See. However, even more than the relations between the center and the peripheral organs, what concerns us is a clear understanding of the principle which lies at the basis of these relations or the way in which the two powers, the papal and the episcopal, both ordinary and direct, coexist in the Catholic Church. It was already observed that this matter was the object of disputes in all periods, that it was not definitely settled at the Council of Trent, and that in all official documents it is approached with evident awareness of the existence of the rights of the two parties, without ignoring or minimizing their respective functions (witness the various schemes for the constitution, *de ecclesia* proposed at the Vatican Council).

The Church, in fact, is not a federation in which various independent heads are gathered around a president. It is not even comparable to a state in which its peripheral functionaries are only delegates of the central power. In fact, the bishops, as successors of the apostles, have received from these an inalienable power of government; that is, their power is of divine right but is territorially limited and attached to that of the pope. In turn, the papal primacy does not mean absorption of lower jurisdictions or exercise of unlimited power, but a principle of unity, conformity of faith and of institutions, a source of ecumenical communion.

No imperialism, therefore, but a primacy of responsibility which guarantees the solidarity of the churches in the world. No other authority, not even a council, goes this far; and only the Apostolic See has a universal and perennial range, although it is incumbent upon it to give proof of great wisdom and discretion in harmonizing its prerogatives with those of the bishops, who are the pope's fellow-bishops.

The papal magisterium has two wide fields of operation: one

ordinary, the other extraordinary pertaining to dogmatic definitions. Of the first we have spoken. As to the second, by way of example, we shall name a number of documents usually considered as containing truths proposed *ex cathedra*, in an infallible way, by the pope: the *Tomus Flaviani* of Leo the Great, on the two natures in Christ; the letter of Agatho on the two wills in Christ; the end of the bull *Unam sanctam* of Boniface VIII; the constitution *Benedictus Deus* of Benedict XII, on the beatific vision of the saints in paradise; the bull *Exsurge Domine* of Leo X, against Luther; the apostolic constitution *Cum occasione* of Innocent X, condemning the propositions of the *Augustinus* of Jansenius; that of Innocent XI, against Molinos; the bull *Unigenitus* of Clement XI, against the Jansenists; the constitution *Auctorem fidei* of Pius VI, which condemns the decisions of the Synod of Pistoia; the bull *Ineffabilis* of Pius IX, on the Immaculate Conception; the encyclical *Pascendi*, and the *motu proprio Lamentabili*, of Pius X, against Modernism; and the very recent definition of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, *Munificentissimus Deus*, of Pius XII.

Besides these acts, the dogmatic definitions and the professions of faith enacted by the councils and approved by the popes belong to the creedal documents of Catholic faith, while papal encyclicals very rarely contain material having the character of infallible definitions *ex cathedra*. To this second type belongs also the *Syllabus*. This, of course, does not exclude the fact that it is almost impossible for the bishops of Rome to fall into an error of faith, even as private persons. On the contrary, it implies that it is the duty of the faithful to accept all papal teachings as having the secure guarantee of maintaining the perfect integrity of Catholic doctrine. Finally, it may not be superfluous to note that the power exercised by the popes in the political field does not have anything in common with their

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prerogatives of infallibility but falls in the sphere of public right as it exists in the various historical periods. Consequently, if in other eras the popes were also supreme judges of Christianity, today they prefer the use of means of a moral order to enforce discipline, and spiritual punishments to correct the erring. They know that, above all, their actions must affect consciences, that they must tend to intensify Christian life and inspire people to essentially supernatural ideals rather than to political or temporal aims.

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From all the above, we must not conclude that the papacy is principally a policing organ in the Church, or that it exercises a tyrannical power. On the contrary, authority in Christianity is always a means in the service of truth; and obedience, even if it regards the pope, is never an end in itself. If the Mystical Body of Christ must also have an organizational structure by which to manifest itself concretely, such means and powers have their origin in love, which has made possible and even now sustains that Body. They are justified precisely by the service of love which they render. This is the principal rule in the "Church of the living God, pillar and foundation of truth (I Timothy 3:15)." *

* At the close of this study, it seems appropriate to caution the reader not to lose sight of the fact that in the life the Church, and of the papacy in particular, a law is present which is common to any associated life resting on authority.

Law, which is authority, tends inevitably to extend the range of its competence every time society itself extends the limits of its membership, its spheres of interest and its areas of activity. So that, the wider the radius of society becomes, the more must its central body consolidate, exactly as happens in the life of a tree, in which the wider its branches become, the larger and more solid must its trunk also be.

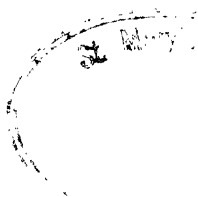
The cohesive force in the Church is the papacy. This force must exercise greater centripetal energy as the centrifugal forces of Christianity tend to expand more widely. And if a certain tension between the two forces is inevitable, it remains the task of the Church to maintain the necessary equilibrium.

We believe that such a balance will always be maintained because God is

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present in the Church, and "authority and liberty" will always find a harmonious union in Christian souls, just as they do, though in an infinite manner, in God Himself.

We also believe that all Christians and other peoples have it within themselves to make an effective contribution toward an ever greater fusion between papacy and Christianity, authority and liberty, if they but rise above anti-historical positions, narrow sectarian attitudes and past mistakes.—Translator's note.



Chronological List of the Popes and Other Historical Data

Compiled by REV. HENRY J. YANNONE

*First Century—Four Popes **

1. St. Peter—33–67 (or 42–67) A.D.—Bethsaida in Galilee. Head of the Apostolic College, received from Jesus Christ the supreme pontifical power to be transmitted to his successors. Reigned after the Ascension of Christ first at Antioch, then at Rome, where he was martyred between 64–67 A.D.

2. St. Linus—67–76 (67–79) A.D.—Tuscia, Italy. Mentioned by St. Paul in the second letter to Timothy (II Tim. 4:21).

3. St. Cletus (or Anacletus)—76–88 (76–91) A.D.—Rome. Martyr; was buried near St. Peter.

4. St. Clement I—88–97 (92–101) A.D.—Rome. Martyr. Mentioned by St. Paul in his letter to the Philippians (1:4). He left us an epistle to the Corinthians in which he assumes the primacy of jurisdiction. Bishop Lightfoot (Anglican) says that

* The list of the popes of the first and the second centuries was left to us by St. Irenaeus, Bishop of Lyons (177–78), who came to Rome to collect from local sources the necessary data for his documentary listing of the popes.

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the "noble remonstrance" in this epistle is "undoubtedly the first step towards papal domination."

Second Century—Ten Popes

5. St. Evaristus—95–105 (101–105) A.D.—Greece. Martyr; prescribed that matrimony should receive the solemn benediction of the priest.

6. St. Alexander I—105–115 (109–119) A.D.—Rome. Martyr; instituted the use of holy water in churches and in houses.

7. St. Sixtus I—115–125 A.D.—Rome. Martyr; to him is ascribed the insertion of the threefold *Sanctus* in the Mass.

8. St. Telesphorus—125–136 A.D.—Greece. Martyr.

9. St. Hyginus—136–140 (138–142) A.D.—Athens, Greece. Martyr; organized the lower clerical orders.

10. St. Pius I—140–155 A.D.—Aquileia, Italy. Martyr; insisted that Easter should be celebrated on a Sunday.

11. St. Anicetus—155–166 A.D.—Syria. Martyr. St. Polycarp came to Rome in order to confer with him about the time of the celebration of Easter.

12. St. Soter—166–175 A.D.—Fondi, Italy. Martyr; he sent spiritual and temporal relief to the Christians who suffered for the faith in exile and in the mines.

13. St. Eleutherius—175–189 A.D.—Nicopolis, Greece. Martyr; he is said to have sent priest to Britain at the request of King Lucius.

14. St. Victor I—189–199 A.D.—Africa. Martyr; he convened a council in Rome, in order to settle the dispute of the bishops of Asia Minor about the celebration of Easter.

Third Century—Fifteen Popes

15. St. Zephyrinus—199–217 A.D.—Rome. Martyr; forbade

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metropolitans to pass sentence on their suffragan bishops without the consent of the Holy See.

Tertullian wrote about the year 210 of this pope: "I hear that a peremptory decision has been given. The supreme pontiff, the bishop of bishops, has said: 'I remit sin to those who are penitent.'"

16. St. Callistus I—217–222 A.D.—Rome. Martyr. One of the largest catacombs of Rome bears his name. The Church has always held his memory in great esteem on account of his successful combats against the heretics of his age.

[St. Hyppolitus (antipope, 217–235) died a martyr.]

17. St. Urban I—222–230 A.D.—Rome. Martyr. In his reign St. Cecilia suffered martyrdom and left her large property to the Church.

18. St. Pontian—230–235 A.D.—Rome. Martyr; was banished to the mines of Sardinia, where he suffered the severest privations and such brutal treatment that he died from its effects.

19. St. Anterus—235–236 A.D.—Greece. Martyr; it is said that he ordered the collection of the acts of the martyrs.

20. St. Fabian—236–250 A.D.—Rome. Martyr. The historian Eusebius relates that the choice fell on him, because a dove had perched on his head at the election.

21. St. Cornelius—251–253 A.D.—Rome. Martyr; convened a council in which Novatian, a schismatic antipope, was excommunicated.

[Novatian, Rome (antipope, 251–258).]

22. St. Lucius I—253–254 A.D.—Rome. Martyr; suffered exile for the faith.

23. St. Stephen I—254–257 A.D.—Rome. Martyr; upheld the custom of not re-baptizing persons who had been baptized in due form by heretics.

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24. St. Sixtus II—257–258 A.D.—Greece. Martyr; reconciled the churches of Africa and Asia Minor which were on the verge of schism.
25. St. Dionysius—259–268 A.D.—place of origin unknown. Called a synod at Rome (260) to settle doctrinal matters. Tried the Patriarch of Alexandria for alleged doctrinal error.
26. St. Felix I—269–274 A.D.—Rome. Martyr; prescribed the rite for the dedication of churches. In the dispute during his reign about the bishopric of Antioch, provoked by the heresy of Paul of Samosata, Emperor Aurelian gave the remarkable decision: "Let him be bishop of Antioch who is in communion with the bishops of Italy, especially with the bishop of Rome."
27. St. Eutychianus—275–283 A.D.—Luni, Tuscany. We know no details of his pontificate.
28. St. Caius—283–296 A.D.—Dalmatia. Martyr; was a near relation of Emperor Diocletian and converted many of the Roman nobility.
29. St. Marcellinus—296–304 A.D.—Rome. Martyr; enlarged the catacombs; was interred in the Priscillian catacombs.

Fourth Century—Ten Popes

30. St. Marcellus I—308–309 A.D.—Rome. Martyr.
31. St. Eusebius—309–310 A.D.—Greek from southern Italy. Decided that those who apostatized should be admitted to communion after doing penance.
[Heraclius (309–310) a doubtful antipope.]
32. St. Miltiades or Melchiades—311–314 A.D.—Africa. The last of the popes buried in the catacombs. With the conversion of Emperor Constantine the era of persecution ceased. For two hundred years, from St. Peter to St. Marcellus, the popes had died the death of martyrdom for the fundamental truth of Christianity, that Christ is the Son of God. Now the Church

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comes forth from the catacombs, and the spiritual supremacy of the popes over the whole Christian world appears plainly as an acknowledged fact.

33. St. Sylvester I—314–335 A.D.—Rome. His legates presided over the General Council of Nicaea (325), in which Arianism was condemned.

34. St. Mark—Jan. 336–Oct. 335 A.D.—Rome. The first pope who conferred the pallium.

35. St. Julius I—337–352 A.D.—Rome. St. Athanasius, bishop of Alexandria, appealed to him and was upheld by him against the Arian bishops. He declared to the bishops of the council held at Serdica: "The Canons of the Church forbid that decrees be published by the bishops without the sanction of the bishop of Rome."

36. St. Liberius—352–366 A.D.—Rome. He wrote to the Arian emperor: "Do not interfere in Church affairs and give no precepts, but rather learn them from us." He bore his exile with fortitude and returned an unconquered defender of the faith.

[Felix II, Rome (antipope, 355–365).]

37. St. Damasus I—366–384 A.D.—Rome. One of the most learned and zealous popes of Christian antiquity. He called St. Jerome to Rome, who at his request made his famous translation of the Holy Scriptures, called the Vulgate. In a synod at Rome he condemned the errors of Macedonius, three years before the council of Constantinople (Second General Council, held at Constantinople 381 A.D.) and conferred by his sanction the title "ecumenical" upon it. The creed of the council of Nicaea was enlarged at this council.

[Ursinus, Roman deacon, antipope (366–367)—died after 381.]

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38. St. Siricius—384–399 A.D.—Rome. Held several councils for the suppression of heresies.
39. St. Anastasius I—399–401 A.D.—Rome. Censured the errors of Origen.

Fifth Century—Twelve Popes

40. St. Innocent I—401–417 A.D.—Albano, Italy. The bishops of North Africa sent him the acts of their council, in which the heresy of Pelagius was condemned. He approved them and excommunicated Pelagius. St. Augustine wrote: "The acts have been sent to the Holy See and the answer has arrived. The case is closed; let the heresy now have an end."
41. St. Zosimus—417–418 A.D.—Greece. Permitted the blessing of the Easter candle in all parish churches.
42. St. Boniface I—418–422 A.D.—Rome. Admonished the bishops of France to obtain for their councils the confirmation of the Holy See.
- [Eulalius, archdeacon of Rome (antipope, 418–419).]
43. St. Celestine I—422–432 A.D.—Campania, Italy. In his reign, St. Patrick, who had received apostolic faculties from him, converted Ireland. He sent St. Palladius from Rome to Scotland as its first bishop. When the heresy of Nestorius became known, St. Cyril, bishop of Alexandria, appealed to Rome, and Pope Celestine convened the Third General Council, held at Ephesus (A.D. 431), in which the heresy of Nestorius was condemned.
44. St. Sixtus III—432–440 A.D.—Rome. Defended the supremacy of the pope over Illyricum.
45. St. Leo I ("the Great")—440–461 A.D.—Tusculum, Italy. He saved Rome from the disastrous invasion of the barbarian Huns. The Fourth General Council, which condemned the heresy of Eutyches, was convened at Chalcedon (451 A.D.).

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When Anatolius, patriarch of Constantinople, requested the council to grant to his see the place of honor next to Rome, Pope Leo wrote to the emperor: "Anatolius may boast of being bishop of the imperial residence, but he cannot make it an Apostolic See."

46. St. Hilary (or Hilarus)—461–468 A.D.—Sardinia. From him dates the beginning of the great Vatican library.

47. St. Simplicius—468–483 A.D.—Tivoli, Italy. Upheld the supremacy of the pope in matters of faith against the future schismatic patriarch Acacius.

48. St. Felix III (II)—483–492—Rome. He excommunicated bishops Peter the Tanner, Peter Mongus, and the Patriarch Acacius, for disobedience. So numbered because Felix II, an antipope, had occupied the papal throne (355–365).

49. St. Gelasius I—492–496 A.D.—Africa. He held a council in Rome by which the catalog of the authentic writings of the fathers was published.

50. St. Anastasius II—496–498 A.D.—Rome. Condemned Traducianism, a philosophical error which holds that the soul of the offspring originates by transmission from the parents.

51. St. Symmachus—498–514 A.D.—Sardinia. Protected the Church in troubled times against schism and heresy, and supported 225 bishops, during the persecution, in Africa. When the Arian king, Theodoric, convened a synod and demanded that the bishops should condemn Symmachus, they answered: "It has never happened that the head of the Church was judged by his subjects."

[Laurentius. Roman archpriest (antipope, 498, 501–507).]

Sixth Century—Fourteen Popes

52. St. Hormisdas—514–523 A.D.—Frosinone, Italy. He up-

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held the decrees of the Council of Chalcedon against the violence of Emperor Anastasius.

53. St. John I—523–526 A.D.—Tuscany. Martyr. The Arian Theodoric, king of the Visigoths, commenced a persecution, during which the holy pope died in prison and the famous Christian philosopher Boethius was beheaded.

54. Felix IV (III)—526–530 A.D.—Benevento, Italy. Opponent of semi-Pelagianism.

55. Dioscorus of Alexandria—Sept. 22–Oct. 14, 530.

56. Boniface II—530–532 A.D.—Rome. Under him the learned Dionysius Exiguus introduced the counting of the Christian era, commencing with the birth of Christ.

57. John II—533–535 A.D.—Rome. Emperor Justinian of Constantinople addressed him in his letter as the head of all churches.

58. St. Agapetus I—535–536 A.D.—Rome. Confirmed the decrees against the Arians.

59. St. Silverius—536–537 A.D.—Frosinone, Italy. Martyr; died in exile, whither the emperor had sent him at the instigation of the Monophysites. The bishop of Patara defended him before the emperor and said: "Remember, there are many kings on earth, but only one pope over all the churches of the world."

60. Vigilius—537–555 A.D.—Rome. Under him the Fifth General Council was convened at Constantinople and the famous dispute about the so-called "Three Chapters" settled (553). When Emperor Justinian used violence against the pope, he answered: "You can make a prisoner of me, but not of the Apostle St. Peter."

61. Pelagius I—556–561 A.D.—Rome. Re-organized the patrimony of St. Peter.

62. John III—561–574 A.D.—Rome. Reigned during the Lombard invasion.

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63. Benedict I—575–579 A.D.—Rome. In a period of war and famine, a benefactor of Italy.
64. Pelagius II—579–590 A.D.—Rome. Italy was visited by a fearful pestilence, during which the pope turned his house into a hospital and died a victim of his self-sacrificing charity.
65. St. Gregory I (“the Great”)—590–604 A.D.—Rome. One of the great fathers and doctors of the Church. He sent St. Augustine with 39 Benedictine monks to convert England. He reformed the plain chant, and was considerably active in establishing ecclesiastical discipline and order in all parts of the world. Though the head of the Church, he styled himself “the servant of the servants of God.”

Seventh Century—Twenty Popes

66. Sabinianus—604–606 A.D.—Blera (Tuscia), Italy.
67. Boniface III—Feb. 19, 607–Nov. 12, 607 A.D.—Rome. Emperor Phocas forbade the patriarch of Constantinople to use the title “ecumenical,” “because,” he said, “Rome is the see of St. Peter and head of all churches.”
68. St. Boniface IV—608–615 A.D.—Marsico, Italy. Dedicated the ancient Pantheon, or temple of all pagan gods, to the Blessed Virgin. He instituted All Saints’ Day.
69. St. Adeodatus I (or Deusdedit)—615–618 A.D.—Rome. Displayed heroic charity during a fearful pestilence.
70. Boniface V—619–625 A.D.—Naples. Took the young church of England under his special care.
71. Honorius I—625–638 A.D.—Campania, Italy. At the Sixth General Council (680 A.D.) Pope Honorius was censured because, as Pope Leo on this occasion states, “he did not extinguish the incipient flame of heresy (Monothelitism) by his decree as it behooved apostolic authority, but fomented it by remissness.” In his letter to Sergius, Honorius did not intend to

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give a dogmatic decision (*ex cathedra*), but, deceived by that wily leader of the new heresy, advised that for the sake of peace no further mention of one or two will activities in Christ should be made because the one might be misinterpreted as Monophysitic and the other as Nestorian, and that the faithful should simply confess that one and the same Christ wrought divine as well as human acts—which shows that Honorius did not share the error of Sergius. He encouraged the conversion of England and sent Birinus as bishop of Dorchester.

72. Severinus—May 28, 640—Aug. 2, 640—Rome.

73. John IV—640–642 A.D.—Dalmatia. Expended the treasures of the Church to redeem captive Christians, and sent warning to the clergy of Northern Ireland against a threatened revival of Pelagianism.

74. Theodore I—642–649 A.D.—Greece. Eighty-six African bishops sent him a synodal letter, in which they had written: "Since the earliest age it has been law that decrees formed in the most distant provinces receive their legal force only through the confirming authority of the Holy See."

75. St. Martin I—649–655 A.D.—Todi, Italy. Martyr. For having condemned the heresy of the Monothelites, he was dragged a prisoner to Constantinople and sent into exile, where he died a martyr of the faith.

76. St. Eugene I—655–657 A.D.—Rome.

77. St. Vitalian—657–672 A.D.—Segni, Italy. Sent the learned monk Theodore to England, as archbishop of Canterbury with jurisdiction over all England. His coming introduced an era of sacred and secular learning and education. Convents and convent schools flourished and produced famous men like Venerable Bede, Alcuin, and many others.

78. Adeodatus II—672–676 A.D.—Rome.

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79. Donus—676–678 A.D.—Rome. Received the submission of Archbishop Reparatus of Ravenna to the papacy.

80. St. Agatho—678–681 A.D.—a Greek, born in Palermo, Sicily. In his letter to the Sixth General Council (at Constantinople, 680) he says: "It is a fact that this See (Rome) through the grace of God has never strayed from the apostolic tradition and has never been tainted by heresy, because it has been said to Peter: 'I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not.'"

81. St. Leo II—682–683 A.D.—Sicily. In his decree, confirming the Sixth General Council, he says: "We confirm it with the authority of St. Peter."

82. St. Benedict II—684–685 A.D.—Rome. Re-instated St. Wilfrid to the See of York, of which he had been unjustly deprived.

83. John V—685–686 A.D.—Syria. Asserted that the sees of Sardinia were directly subject to Rome.

84. Conon—686–687 A.D.—place of origin unknown. Ordained St. Kilian, apostle of Franconia, Germany.

85. St. Sergius I—687–701 A.D.—Antioch. He baptized Cædwalla, King of the West Saxons, in Rome. Sergius made St. Willibrord, the apostle of Friesland, bishop of that country.

[Peter, archpriest of Rome (686); Theodore, priest of Rome (686). Both are improperly called antipopes. Theodore (687)—after he became archpriest of Rome, improperly called antipope.]

Eighth Century—Twelve Popes

86. John VI—701–705 A.D.—Greece.

87. John VII—705–707 A.D.—Greece. Regained for the papacy the Alpine patrimonies which had been confiscated by the Lombards.

88. Sisinnius—Jan. 15, 708–Feb. 4, 708 A.D.—Syria.
89. Constantine—708–715 A.D.—Syria. In his reign two English kings, Conrad of Mercia and Offa of Essex, came to Rome, resigned their crowns and entered a monastery.
90. St. Gregory II—715–731 A.D.—Rome. He gave apostolic faculties to St. Corbinian, the apostle of Bavaria, and ordained St. Boniface, the apostle of Germany, bishop and primate of Germany. Leo the Isaurian, emperor of Constantinople, began the dispute about sacred images during his reign.
91. St. Gregory III—731–741 A.D.—Syria. Held a council in Rome against the Iconoclasts.
92. St. Zachary—741–752 A.D.—Greece. He saved Rome from the assault of the Lombards, and ratified the election of Pepin to the throne of the Franks.
[Stephen II, Rome; died before his consecration (752); improperly called antipope.]
93. Stephen II (III)—752–757 A.D.—Rome. He anointed Pepin, king of the Franks, at Paris. Pepin defeated the troublesome Lombards and gave the provinces and cities taken from them to the Holy See.
94. St. Paul I—757–767 A.D.—Rome. Turned his father's house into a convent and was a zealous patron of monastic life.
[Theophylactus—Roman archdeacon (757), improperly called antipope. Constantine II (antipope, 767–768). Philip—improperly called antipope (768).]
95. Stephen III (IV)—768–772 A.D.—Sicily.
96. Adrian I—772–795 A.D.—Rome. Friend of Charles the Great; Seventh General Council (at Nicaea, 787), which condemned the heresy of the Iconoclasts, who rejected the use and veneration of images.
97. St. Leo III—795–816 A.D.—Rome. Consecrated Charles

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the Great as Roman Emperor of the West and protector of the Church. King Aethelwolf of England brought his son Alfred (later, Alfred the Great) to Rome.

Ninth Century—Twenty Popes

98. Stephen IV (V)—816–817 A.D.—Rome.

99. St. Paschal I—817–824 A.D.—Rome. Showed a great zeal for the conversion of Denmark.

[Zinzinus (?), priest of Rome (824)—improperly called antipope.]

100. Eugene II—824–827 A.D.—Rome. Held a council in Rome which decreed that in all episcopal cities, in parishes and fitting localities, schools for common and higher education should be erected.

101. Valentine—Aug.–Sept. 827 A.D.—Rome. Reigned forty days.

102. Gregory IV—827–844 A.D.—Rome. Conferred the pallium on St. Ansgar, and appointed him apostolic legate over the northern nations.

[John, Roman archdeacon (844)—improperly called antipope.]

103. Sergius II—844–847 A.D.—Rome. Called a father of the poor, of orphans and widows.

104. St. Leo IV—847–855 A.D.—Rome. The piratical Saracens, who ravaged the coasts of Italy, were defeated by the papal army, and the port of the Tiber and Rome protected by fortifications.

105. Benedict III—855–858 A.D.—Rome. He repaired Rome after the raid of the Saracens.

[Anastasius, a Roman priest (855)—improperly called antipope.]

106. St. Nicholas I ("the Great")—858–867 A.D.—Rome. A

great and energetic pope in troubled times. He upheld the sacredness of marriage against Count Baldwin of Flanders and King Lothar II, and enforced ecclesiastical discipline and law everywhere. Beginning of the Greek Schism.

107. Adrian II—867–872 A.D.—Rome. Eighth General Council held at Constantinople, condemned Photius, and dealt with the Greek Schism (869–870).

108. John VIII—872–882 A.D.—Rome. Received St. Methodius, apostle of the Slavs, in Rome, and granted special faculties to him—for instance, to celebrate the Liturgy in Slavonic.

109. Marinus I—882–884 A.D.—Gallese, Italy. First bishop of Cere; friend of King Alfred of England, to whom he sent a particle of the Holy Cross. At Alfred's request, he freed of all taxes the *Schola Anglorum*, the headquarters of the English at Rome. He is the first pope who had been bishop before his election. (This pope is sometimes listed as Martin II.)

110. St. Adrian III—884–885 A.D.—Rome.

111. Stephen V (VI)—885–891 A.D.—Rome. A father of the poor. He distributed all his property among the needy when he became pope, and fed orphans and poor people at his own table.

112. Formosus—891–896 A.D.—Rome. He had been bishop of Porto.

113. Boniface VI—896 A.D.—Rome. Died shortly after his election.

114. Stephen VI (VII)—896–897 A.D.—Rome. Under his reign the posthumous trial of Pope Formosus was held. (897).

115. Romanus—Aug. 897–Nov. 897 A.D.—Gallese, Italy. Granted the pallium to Vitalis during his short reign.

116. Theodore II—897 A.D.—Rome; died renowned for his intense love of the poor.

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117. John IX—898–900 A.D.—Tivoli, Italy. The bishops of Southern Germany saluted him in their address as “the august bishop, not of the one city, but of the whole world.”

Tenth Century—Twenty-Two Popes

118. Benedict IV—900–903 A.D.—Rome. As pope he crowned Emperor Louis III the Blind.

119. Leo V—July 903–Jan. 904 A.D.—Ardea, Italy.

[Christopher, Rome (antipope, Sept., 903–Jan., 904).]

120. Sergius III—904–911 A.D.—Rome. Opposed the errors of the Greeks on the Descent of the Holy Ghost and declared the fourth marriage of the Greek emperor, Leo VI, valid.

121. Anastasius III—911–913 A.D.—Rome. Determined the ecclesiastical divisions of Germany.

122. Lando—July 913–Feb. 914 A.D.—Sabina, Italy. Very little is known of his short reign.

123. John X—914–928 A.D.—Tossignano (Imola), Italy. Freed the pontifical states from the inroads of the Saracens.

124. Leo VI—May 928–Dec. 928 A.D.—Rome. Issued a bull ordering the bishops of Dalmatia to confine their activities within their own dioceses.

125. Stephen VII (VIII)—928–931 A.D.—Rome.

126. John XI—931–935 A.D.—Rome.

127. Leo VII—936–939 A.D.—Rome. Condemned forced baptism of Jews in Germany.

128. Stephen VIII (IX)—939–942 A.D.—Rome. His pontificate was troubled by war in Italy.

129. Marinus II—942–946 A.D.—Rome. A zealous ecclesiastical reformer.

130. Agapetus II—946–955 A.D.—Rome.

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131. John XII (Ottaviano of the Counts of Tusculum)—955–964 A.D.—Rome. He anointed Otto the Great, of Germany, as Roman Emperor, which dignity remained thenceforth with the rulers of the German Empire.

[Leo VIII, Rome (antipope, 963–965).]

132. Benedict V—964–965 (or 966) A.D.—Rome. Was carried off by Emperor Otto to Germany, where he died.

133. John XIII—965–972 A.D.—Rome. Sent legates to Poland, whose King Miesko had been converted to Catholicism.

134. Benedict VI—973–974 A.D.—Rome. Was imprisoned and put to death under the antipope Boniface Franco.

[Boniface VII (Franco) (antipope, 974; 984–985).]

135. Benedict VII—974–983 A.D.—Rome. Held synods against the sin of simony.

136. John XIV (Peter)—983–984 A.D.—Pavia, Italy.

137. John XV—985–996 A.D.—Rome. Established peace between King Ethelred of England and the Duke of Normandy. A confusion of dates caused some historians to list an imaginary successor of the antipope, Boniface VII as John XV. This caused a disorder in the numbering of the popes named John until the enthronement of John XXII in 1316.

138. Gregory V (Bruno of the dukes of Carinthia)—996–999 A.D.—Germany. He told the imperial and the republican parties, who disputed about their right in papal elections: "We are representatives of the Prince of the Apostles and therefore hold our power from him alone."

[John XVI (John Philagathus)—antipope (Apr. 997–Feb. 998), Rossano, Italy.]

139. Sylvester II (Gerbert)—999–1003 A.D.—Auvergne, France. One of the most learned men of his time.

Eleventh Century—Eighteen Popes

140. John XVII (John Crescentius)—June 1003—Dec. 1003 A.D.—Rome.

141. John XVIII (Phasianus)—1004—1009 A.D.—Rome. Ordained St. Boniface of Querfurt, the apostle of the Prussians.

142. Sergius IV (Peter)—1009—1012 A.D.—Rome. Promoted monasticism.

143. Benedict VIII (Theophylactus of the Counts of Tusculum)—1012—1024 A.D.—Rome. Appointed the monk Guido of Arezzo, who had invented the system of musical notes, a teacher of music.

[Gregory (antipope, 1012).]

144. John XIX (Roman of the Counts of Tusculum)—1024—1032 A.D.—Rome. He was a layman at the time of his election.

145. Benedict IX (Theophylactus of the Counts of Tusculum)—1032—1045—Rome. Resigned in 1045.

[Sylvester III (John), Rome (antipope, Jan. 20—Mar. 10, 1045).]

146. Gregory VI (John Gratian)—1045—1046—Rome.

147. Clement II (Suidgerius of the Lords of Morsleben and Hornburg)—1046—1047—Saxony, Germany. Crowned Henry III.

[Benedict IX (Nov. 1047—July 1048) reappears as antipope after his resignation, in 1045.]

148. Damasus II (Poppo)—July—August 1048 A.D.—Bavaria. After a short reign of twenty-three days, he died a victim of malaria.

149. St. Leo IX (Bruno of the Counts of Egisheim-Dagsburg)—1049—1054 A.D.—Lorraine.

150. Victor II (Gebhard)—1055—1057 A.D.—Nordgau, Germany. He continued the reforms of his predecessor.

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151. Stephen IX (X) (Frederick of the Dukes of Lorraine)—Aug. 1057–March 1058—Lorraine. Died on the eve of the Norman invasion.

[Benedict X ("John") (antipope, Apr., 1058–Jan., 1059).]

152. Nicholas II (Gerhard of Burgundy)—1059–1061 A.D.—Burgundy. Established the rule that the pope should be elected by the cardinals.

153. Alexander II (Anselm of Lucca)—1061–1073 A.D.—Baggio, Italy. The first pope elected bishop of Rome by the cardinals.

[Honorius II (Cadalous), Verona (antipope, 1061–1072).]

154. St. Gregory VII (Hildebrand)—1073–1085 A.D.—Soana, Tuscia, Italy. A great and holy pope, whose life was devoted to reforming abuses that had crept into the Church, and to resisting the encroachments of princely power on the rights of the Church. He defended the sacredness of marriage by compelling Henry IV, by Church censures, to return to his lawful wife, Bertha.

[Clement III (Guibert), Parma, Italy (antipope, 1080; 1084–1100).]

155. Bl. Victor III (Dauferius)—1086–1087—Benevento, Italy. A Benedictine monk; compelled the Mohammedan ruler of Tunis to free the Christian slaves.

156. Bl. Urban II (Otto of Lagery)—1088–1099 A.D.—Champagne, France; inaugurated the first crusade for the deliverance of the Holy Sepulcher of our Lord.

157. Paschal II (Raniero)—1099–1118 A.D.—Pieda (Romagna), Italy. Carried on a struggle with the emperor of Germany over the right of investiture.

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[Theodoric (antipope, 1100–1102); Albert (antipope, 1102); Sylvester IV (antipope, 1105–1111).]

Twelfth Century—Seventeen Popes

158. Gelasius II (John Gaetani)—1118–1119 A.D.—Gaeta, Italy. Died while arranging plans for a council to be convened in Reims.

[Gregory VIII (Bourdin) (antipope, 1118–1121).]

159. Callistus II (Guido of the Counts of Burgundy)—1119–1124 A.D.—Burgundy. Settled the question of investiture. Convoled the Ninth General Council held at the Lateran (1123).

160. Celestine II (Buccapecus)—Dec. 1124 (abdicated immediately).

161. Honorius II (Lambert Scannabecchi)—1124–1130 A.D.—Fagnano (Imola), Italy. Through his efforts the German emperor was reconciled with the papacy.

162. Innocent II (Papareschi) 1130–1143 A.D.—Rome. Held the Tenth General Council at the Lateran.

[Anacletus II (antipope, 1130–1138); Victor IV (antipope, Mar. 15, 1138–May 29, 1138).]

163. Celestine II (Guido)—1143–1144 A.D.—Città di Castello, Italy.

164. Lucius II (Caccianemici)—1144–1145 A.D.—Bologna, Italy.

165. Bl. Eugene III (Pignatelli)—1145–1153 A.D.—Pisa, Italy.

166. Anastasius IV—1153–1154 A.D.—Rome. Restored the Pantheon.

167. Adrian IV (Nicholas Brakespeare)—1154–1159 A.D.—England. Charged with “donation of Ireland,” whereby he is said to have bestowed Ireland upon the King of England, Henry II, by the bull *Laudabiliter*—proved to be a forgery. Cardinal

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Gasquet says: "A careful examination will reject the Bull as an undoubted forgery. . . . Adrian IV, far from granting any approbation of Henry in his design on Ireland . . . positively refused to be a party to such an injustice."

168. Alexander III (Bandinelli)—1159–1181 A.D.—Siena, Italy. Called the Eleventh General Council at the Lateran, Rome, where the errors of the Albigenses were condemned and the canons against simony, usury, dangerous tournaments, and lawless feuds of the knights were renewed.

[Victor IV (V) (antipope, 1159–1164); Paschal III (antipope, 1164–1168); Callistus III (antipope, 1168–1178); Innocent III (antipope, 1179–1180).]

169. Lucius III (Allucingoli)—1181–1185—Lucca, Italy. Settled ecclesiastical disputes with King William of Scotland.

170. Urban III (Crivelli)—1185–1187 A.D.—Milan, Italy.

171. Gregory VIII (Alberto di Morra)—Oct. 1187–Dec. 1187—Benevento, Italy. Died while attempting to mediate between Pisa and Genoa.

172. Clement III (Scolari)—1187–1191 A.D.—Rome. Carried on the third crusade under Frederick Barbarossa.

173. Celestine III (Bobone)—1191–1198 A.D.—Rome. Defended the sanctity of marriage against the incestuous King Alfonso of León; and against Philip Augustus of France, who attempted a divorce from his lawful wife, Ingeburg of Denmark.

174. Innocent III (Lotarius of the Counts of Segni)—1198–1216 A.D.—Anagni, Italy. Called the teacher of the world. Worked against the heresies of his age and the reformation of morals. Introduced the annual Paschal communion, which makes it an obligation for Catholics to go to confession and to receive the Holy Eucharist during Easter time.

Thirteenth Century—Seventeen Popes

175. Honorius III (Savelli)—1216–1227 A.D.—Rome. Gave papal approbation to the institution of the Franciscan and the Dominican Orders.
176. Gregory IX (Ugolino of the Counts of Segni)—1227–1241 A.D.—Anagni, Italy. Restored a revised Aristotle to the University of Paris.
177. Celestine IV (Castiglioni)—1241 A.D.—Milan, Italy. Died seventeen days after his election as bishop of Rome.
178. Innocent IV (Fieschi)—1243–1254 A.D.—Genoa, Italy. Author of the commentary on the decretals of Gregory IX.
179. Alexander IV (Rinaldo of the Counts of Segni)—1254–1261 A.D.—Anagni, Italy.
180. Urban IV (Pantaléon)—1261–1264 A.D.—Troyes, France. Instituted the feast of Corpus Christi.
181. Clement IV (Le Gros)—1265–1268 A.D.—France. He was a man of great ability and rectitude.
182. St. Gregory X (Tebaldo Visconti)—1271–1276 A.D.—Piacenza, Italy. Held the Fourteenth General Council at Lyons (1274), at which 500 bishops, one king, and ambassadors of the Christian governments of Europe, representatives of the Greek emperor and his prelates, and ambassadors of the Grand Khan of Tartary were present. Four of the latter were baptized, and the Greeks abjured their schism.
183. Bl. Innocent V (Peter of Tarantasia)—Feb. 1276–June 1276—France. Worked for peace among the Guelphs and the Ghibellines.
184. Adrian V (Fieschi)—July 1276–Aug. 1276—Genoa, Italy. Died thirty-six days after his election.

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185. John XXI (Peter Juliani)—1276–1277 A.D.—Lisbon, Portugal. Had a short but active pontificate.
186. Nicholas III (Orsini)—1277–1280 A.D.—Rome. At the request of the Tartar Khan, he sent Franciscan missionaries to Persia and China.
187. Martin IV (Simon de Brie)—1281–1285 A.D.—France. A father of the poor in the terrible famine which visited the pontifical states. Martin II and III = Marinus I and II.
188. Honorius IV (Savelli)—1285–1287 A.D.—Rome.
189. Nicholas IV (Masci)—1288–1292 A.D.—Ascoli, Italy.
190. St. Celestine V (Peter of Morone)—July 1294–Dec. 1294—Isernia, Italy. Resigned in order to return to his hermitage.
191. Boniface VIII (Benedetto Caetani)—1294–1303 A.D.—Anagni, Italy. Mediated the peace between contending princes, canonized St. Louis of France, and proclaimed the first Jubilee indulgence. He defended the rights of the Church with great dignity against the covetous King Philip the Fair, of France, and suffered persecution and insults from the king's minions with apostolic fortitude.

Fourteenth Century—Ten Popes

192. Bl. Benedict XI (Nicholas Boccasini)—1303–1304 A.D.—Treviso, Italy. When his mother visited him in his pontifical state, the courtiers presented her arrayed in a rich dress; but the pope would not recognize her until she appeared in the dress of her humble station. Then he arose, full of reverence, and said: "This is indeed my mother."
193. Clement V (Bertrand de Got)—1305–1314 A.D.—France. Convened the Fifteenth General Council held at Vienne, France (1312). The council proclaimed the dogma that the human soul is the "form," *i.e.*, the lifegiving principle,

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of the body. He was the first to establish his residence at Avignon, France, which was continued by the five succeeding French popes.

194. John XXII (Jacques d'Euse)—1316–1334 A.D.—France. A great scholar in canon law, and protector of the universities. He caused the erection of the universities of Cambridge, England, and Cahors, France. From him dates the tolling of the bells for evening Angelus.

[Nicholas V, (antipope, 1328–1330).]

195. Benedict XII (Jacques Fournier)—1334–1342 A.D.—France. Established peace between Portugal and Spain.

196. Clement VI (Pierre Roger)—1342–1352 A.D.—France. During the fearful black pestilence which devastated Europe, the pope protected the Jews against the excited people.

197. Innocent VI (Stephen Aubert)—1352–1362 A.D.—France.

198. Bl. Urban V (Guillaume de Grimaud)—1362–1370 A.D.—France. A noted Benedictine canonist; founded universities of Cracow and Vienna, aided universities of Orange, Orléans, Avignon, and Toulouse.

199. Gregory XI (Pierre Roger de Beaufort)—1370–1378 A.D.—France. The residence of popes in Avignon ended with him and was taken up again in Rome.

200. Urban VI (B. Prignano)—1378–1389 A.D.—Naples, Italy. Six months after his election, began the so-called "Western Schism" caused by a number of cardinals who claimed that Urban's election had not been according to the canons of the Church, and then elected an antipope, Clement VII, who was succeeded by Benedict XIII.

201. Boniface IX (Tomacelli)—1389–1404 A.D.—Naples, Italy. Legitimate successor of Urban VI.

Fifteenth Century—Eleven Popes

202. Innocent VII (Migliorati)—1404–1406 A.D.—Solmona, Italy.

203. Gregory XII (Angelo Corrarior or Correr)—1406–1415 A.D.—Venice, Italy. A council was convened by a number of cardinals at Pisa in order to stop the schism, but resulted only in the election of another doubtful pope. Gregory XII finally resigned at the General Council of Constance in 1415, under the condition that the council be first legitimately convoked by his authority, and then should elect another pope to succeed him. The council condemned the heresy of Wycliffe and Huss.

(Obedience Clement VII (Robert of Geneva)—1378–1394 of Avignon) —French antipope of the Great Schism.

Benedict XIII (Piedro de Luna)—1394–1428 —French antipope of the Great Schism.

Clement VIII (Egidio Sánchez Muñoz), antipope—1423–1429—Spain.

Benedict XIV (Garnier), antipope—1425–1430—Rodez.

(Obedience Alexander V (Filargo)—1409–1410—(Crete of Pisa) antipope, elected by the self-summoned Council of Pisa.

John XXIII (Cossa) antipope—1410–1415—elected by the self-summoned Council of Pisa —was deposed.

204. Martin V (Colonna)—1417–1431 A.D.—Rome. Was elected by the Council of Constance. The schism ceased.

205. Eugene IV (Condulmare)—1431–1447 A.D.—Venice. Convened the Seventeenth General Council, which was held first at Ferrara, then at Florence (1438.) The Greek bishops submitted and were united with the Church; but five years later the schism revived.

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206. Nicholas V (Parentucelli)—1447–1455 A.D.—Sarzana, Italy. Fostered arts and sciences and is one of the founders of modern science. He formed the famous Vatican Library and gathered the greatest artists, scientists, and learned men of the age around him.

[Felix V (Amadeus, duke of Savoy) (antipope, 1440–1449).]

207. Callistus III (Borgia)—1455–1458 A.D.—Spain. He preached and supported a crusade against the Turks, who threatened Europe. The Christians vanquished the Turks' power in the famous battle of Belgrade. In a solemn declaration he stated that Joan of Arc had died a martyr for her religion and her country.

208. Pius II (Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini)—1458–1464 A.D.—Siena, Italy. Condemned the Pragmatic Sanction of Bourges, France, which became afterwards the foundation of Gallicanism. Its most obnoxious proposition claimed the superiority of general councils over the pope.

209. Paul II (Barbo)—1464–1471 A.D.—Venice. Forbade legates, governors, and judges to receive gifts.

210. Sixtus IV (Della Rovere)—1471–1484 A.D.—Savona, Italy. Was patron of the arts; the Sistine Chapel bears his name.

211. Innocent VIII (Cibò)—1484–1492 A.D.—Genoa. Mediated peace in England, torn by the War of the Roses. Spain was freed from Mohammedanism and America discovered by Columbus.

212. Alexander VI (Borgia)—1492–1503 A.D.—Borgia, Spain. A pope whose personal character has been severely censured by historians. The political troubles which disturbed Italy and the pontifical states engrossed his energy. Though the unruly barons chafed under his iron rule, the people of Rome loved him as a strong but generous master. In his administration

of Church affairs he followed the traditional rules, made wise constitutions, and never passed any decree at variance with faith and morals.

Sixteenth Century—Seventeen Popes

213. Pius III (Piccolomini)—1503 A.D.—Siena, Italy. A man of spotless character, selected to succeed Alexander VI.

214. Julius II (Della Rovere)—1503–1513 A.D.—Savona, Italy. Laid the foundation of the Basilica of St. Peter; was the patron of art and the friend of Michelangelo, Raphael, and other eminent artists. He convened the Eighteenth General Council in the Lateran, Rome, in which the Pragmatic Sanction of Bourges, which assumed legislative power in a purely ecclesiastical affair, was solemnly condemned.

215. Leo X (Medici)—1513–1521 A.D.—Florence, Italy. Completed the Basilica of St. Peter, the grandest cathedral of the world. He excommunicated Luther.

216. Adrian VI (Adrian Dedel)—1522–1523 A.D.—Utrecht, Holland. Formerly vice-chancellor of the University of Louvain.

217. Clement VII (Medici)—1523–1534 A.D.—Florence. Excommunicated Henry VIII for divorcing himself from his lawful wife and marrying another.

218. Paul III (Farnese)—1534–1549 A.D.—Rome. Convoked the Nineteenth General Council at Trent, Tyrol. He approved the newly founded Order of the Jesuits.

219. Julius III (Del Monte)—1550–1555 A.D.—Rome. Sent Cardinal Pole to Queen Mary of England to aid Catholic restoration.

220. Marcellus II (Cervini)—1555 A.D.—Montepulciano, Italy. Reigned only twenty-two days.

221. Paul IV (Carafa)—1555–1559 A.D.—Naples, Italy.

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Published a bull in which he forbade, under pain of excommunication, the establishment of slavery among the Indians of the West Indies.

222. Pius IV (Medici)—1559–1565 A.D.—Milan, Italy. Ended and confirmed the Council of Trent, in which the errors of Protestantism were condemned, and most salutary reforms in regard to morals and Church discipline were proposed and begun. He reformed Church music with the assistance of the great Palestrina.

223. St. Pius V (Ghisleri)—1566–1572 A.D.—Bosco, Italy. A great saint and an untiring reformer of abuses, who remained on the papal throne the humble and ascetic Dominican monk he had been before.

224. Gregory XIII (Buoncompagni)—1572–1585 A.D.—Bologna, Italy. Corrected the calendar—which correction was gratefully received by the whole Christian world and is today in general use even in Protestant countries.

225. Sixtus V (Peretti)—1585–1590 A.D.—Grottamare, Italy. A great and just ruler, who made the pontifical states the best governed country in Europe and organized the administration of ecclesiastical affairs in an admirable manner.

226. Urban VII (Castagna)—1590 A.D.—Rome. Died before his coronation.

227. Gregory XIV (Sfondrati)—1590–1591 A.D.—Cremona, Italy. A man of charity, prayer, and ascetic life; ordered abolition of Indian slavery in the Philippine Islands.

228. Innocent IX (Facchinetti)—Oct. 1591–Dec. 1591 A.D.—Bologna, Italy. Died two months after his election.

229. Clement VIII (Aldobrandini)—1592–1605 A.D.—Florence, Italy. Established peace between Spain and France, and between France and Savoy. He published the revised edition of

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the Vulgate Bible, which has been ever since the official text used by the Church.

Seventeenth Century—Eleven Popes

230. Leo XI (Medici)—1605 A.D.—Florence, Italy.
231. Paul V (Borghese)—1605–1621 A.D.—Rome. A man of prayer and a devoted servant of Mary. He established the perpetual adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.
232. Gregory XV (Ludovisi)—1621–1623 A.D.—Bologna, Italy. Founded the Propaganda and canonized St. Ignatius and St. Francis Xavier.
233. Urban VIII (Barberini)—1623–1644 A.D.—Florence, Italy. A man of great learning, patron of science and art, and full of zeal for the welfare of the Church. Issued a bull against slavery.
234. Innocent X (Pamfili)—1644–1655 A.D.—Rome. Condemned the errors of Jansenism, which maintained that by original sin man has lost his freedom of will and that divine grace is irresistible. Innocent supported Ireland with ships and money in defending its faith.
235. Alexander VII (Chigi)—1655–1667 A.D.—Siena, Italy.
236. Clement IX (Rospigliosi)—1667–1669 A.D.—Pistoja, Italy. Mediated the peace between France and Spain, beautified Rome, enlarged the Vatican Library, and befriended men of letters.
237. Clement X (Altieri)—1670–1676 A.D.—Rome. Forced Portugal to close its tribunal of the Inquisition.
238. Innocent XI (Odescalchi)—1676–1689 A.D.—Como, Italy. Condemned the four Gallican articles and firmly opposed King Louis XIV of France in his attacks on the rights of the Church.

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239. Alexander VIII (Ottobuoni)—1689–1691 A.D.—Venice; Italy. Supported Venice in its wars against the Turks.
240. Innocent XII (Pignatelli)—1691–1700 A.D.—Naples, Italy. Was admired by all for his knowledge and virtues; a father of the orphans and the poor; he upheld papal infallibility against Gallicanism.

Eighteenth Century—Eight Popes

241. Clement XI (Albani)—1700–1721 A.D.—Urbino, Italy. He opposed to the haughty injustice of princes a life of prayer and patience, went daily to confession, and was a devout client of St. Joseph, on whose feast he died.
242. Innocent XIII (Conti)—1721–1724 A.D.—Rome. Decided against Chinese rites, declaring that converts are forbidden to honor Confucius or ancestors and deceased relatives because these rites are tainted with superstition.
243. Benedict XIII (Orsini)—1724–1730 A.D.—Rome. He accepted the heavy responsibility of the papal dignity with tears of sorrow and only in obedience to his superiors, and continued upon his throne the humble and ascetic life of the Dominican Order, to which he belonged.
244. Clement XII (Corsini)—1730–1740 A.D.—Florence, Italy. Condemned Freemasonry, which had become an ally of the governments in their general hostility to the Holy See.
245. Benedict XIV (Lambertini)—1740–1758 A.D.—Bologna, Italy. A man of profound learning and author of important works on canon law.
246. Clement XIII (Rezzonico)—1758–1769 A.D.—Venice, Italy. Defended without wavering the rights of the Holy See and of the Society of Jesus against the growing persecution of secularistic governments, but finally died almost broken-hearted.

247. Clement XIV (Ganganelli)—1769–1774 A.D.—San Arcangelo, Italy. The conspiracy of the ministers Pombal of Portugal, Aranda of Spain, Tanucci of Naples, supported by Voltaire and the Jansenists in France, had prepared a storm of passion against the Society of Jesus (Jesuits), who had been the staunch defenders of the rights of the Church against the encroachments of absolute state power. The kings of these respective countries, mostly of the Bourbon family, combined to force the pope to decree the abolition of the society. The Jesuits submitted to the decision of the Holy See with dignified obedience.
248. Pius VI (Braschi)—1775–1799 A.D.—Cesena, Italy. The army of the French revolution occupied the pontifical states. He was dragged into captivity and died in Valence, praying for his persecutors.

Nineteenth Century—Six Popes

249. Pius VII (Chiaramonti)—1800–1823 A.D.—Cesena, Italy. He defended with apostolic courage the rights of the Church against the tyranny of the all-powerful Napoleon, emperor of the French. Napoleon lost his throne and the pope returned in triumph to Rome. His first act was the re-establishment of the Society of Jesus, in compliance with the general wish of the Christian world.
250. Leo XII (Della Genga)—1823–1829 A.D.—Genga (Spoleto), Italy. A pontiff of apostolic zeal and a patron of education and learning. He combatted the religious indifference of the age and renewed the censures against Freemasonry.
251. Pius VIII (Castiglioni)—1829–1830 A.D.—Cingoli, Italy.
252. Gregory XVI (Cappellari)—1831–1846 A.D.—Belluno, Italy. Pope of eminent learning and wisdom. He condemned the heretical doctrines of his time and firmly opposed

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the revolutionary plotting which pervaded Europe. When Czar Nicholas I of Russia visited the Vatican, Gregory reproached him with apostolic dignity and courage on account of the relentless cruelty with which the Catholic Poles were persecuted in Russia.

253. Pius IX (Mastai-Ferretti)—1846–1878 A.D.—Sinigallia, Italy. The revolution of 1848 swept over Europe and drove Pius into exile. After his return he promulgated the dogma of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin, condemned the liberalistic errors of the age in his encyclicals and syllabus, and convened the Twentieth General Council at the Vatican, in which the dogma of the infallibility of the pope was proclaimed.

The king of Italy robbed the Holy See of the pontifical states and Rome. The popes lived as a prisoner in the Vatican from 1870 until the Lateran Treaty in February, 1929.

254. Leo XIII (Pecci)—1878–1903 A.D.—Carpineto (Anagni), Italy. He instructed and warned Christendom, in his profound encyclicals, of the dangerous errors of the time, including nihilism, socialism, and communism. His constructive application of Christian principles to economic affairs is set forth in his famous encyclical *Rerum Novarum*.

Twentieth Century—Four Popes

255. St. Pius X (Sarto)—1903–1914 A.D.—Riese (Treviso), Italy. Called "the Pope of the Blessed Sacrament" on account of his decrees urging frequent Holy Communion and early admission of children to the Lord's Table. He died on the eve of the First World War, his last words to the world being a message of peace.

256. Benedict XV (Della Chiesa)—1914–1922 A.D.—

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Genoa, Italy. During the horrors of the First World War, an untiring and gentle advocate of peace and reconciliation, a true father of Christendom. His charity to all, his paternal solicitude for the war prisoners and the wounded, his generous aid to the famine-stricken nations won him the veneration of all and the title of "Pope of Peace."

257. Pius XI (Ratti)—1922–1939 A.D.—Desie (Milan), Italy. A pope of great learning and, like his predecessors, assiduous in his efforts to establish peace among nations and to relieve the distress caused by the First World War. His paternal solicitude was especially directed to the missions in heathen lands and the reunion of the Oriental Churches.

258. Pius XII (Pacelli)—March, 1939—Rome. Presently reigning.

The list of the popes given above is that of the Duchesne-Ehrle-Mercati *Cronotassi* (1947) as it appears in *Enciclopedia Cattolica*, Città del Vaticano, 1955, which is to be considered the best in existence today.

The dates from Pope Linus (67–78) to Pius I (158–167) are approximately correct; more accurate, but not precise to the unit are those from Anicetus (167–175) to Callistus (221–227). From the election of Martin V (1417) to present time there is no doubt whatsoever as to dates or order in the computation.

According to the Duchesne-Ehrle-Mercati computation, the number of authentic popes from St. Peter to Pius XII, is 258. This number includes Dioscorus of Alexandria (Sept. 22, 530—Oct. 14, 530), who died shortly after election; and Celestine II (Buccapesus) (1224), who resigned immediately following his election, both of whom are to be considered authentic popes.

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The real antipopes are 35.¹ The doubtful antipopes are two.² The antipopes improperly so-called are mine.³

As to their places of origin, 100 Popes were Roman; 106 from other parts of Italy; 50 from other countries (France, Germany, Greece, Spain, Holland, England, Portugal, etc.); 2 from unknown places.

Seventy-eight popes are venerated as saints; 9 as blessed. One antipope, Hyppolitus (217–235), died a martyr for the faith.

The historical data concerning some of the activities of each individual pope were compiled in substance from the *Catholic Universe Bulletin*, Cleveland, Ohio, Nov. 15, 1929; the *Gerarchia Cattolica*, Rome; and the Vatican Edition of the *Catholic Directory*, 1929. (Cf. also *Campaigners for Christ Handbook* by David Goldstein [Boston: Thomas J. Flynn & Co., Inc., 1934].)

¹ Real antipopes (35). 1) St. Hyppolitus (217–235), died a martyr; 2) Novatian, Rome (251–258); 3) Felix II, Rome (355–365); 4) Ursicinus, Roman deacon (366–367), died after 381; 5) Eulalius, archdeacon of Rome (418–419); 6) Laurentius, Roman archpriest (498, 501–507); 7) Paschal (687–692); 8) Constantine (767–768); 9) Christopher (Sept. 9, 903–Jan. 904); 10) Leo VIII, Rome (963–965); 11) Boniface VII (974, 984–985); 12) John XVI (Apr. 997–Feb. 998); 13) Gregory (1012); 14) Sylvester II, Rome (Jan. 20–March 10, 1045); 15) Benedict X (Apr. 1058–Jan. 1059); 16) Honorius III, Verona (1061–1072); 17) Clement III, Parma, Italy, (1080; 1084–1100); 18) Theoderic (1100–1102); 19) Albert (1102); 20) Sylvester IV (1105–1111); 21) Gregory VIII (1118–1121); 22) Anacletus II (1130–1138); 23) Victor IV (March 15–May 29, 1138); 24) Victor IV (V) (1159–1164); 25) Pascal III (1164–1168); 26) Callistus III (1168–1178); 27) Innocent III (1179–1180); 28) Nicholas V ((1328–1330); 29) Clement VII (1378–1394) (Avignon); 30) Benedict XIII (1394–1428) (Avignon); 31) Clement VIII (1423–1429); (Avignon); 32) Benedict XIV (1425–1430) (Avignon); 33) Alexander V (1409–1410); (Pisa); 34) John XXIII (1410–1415); (Pisa) Felix V (1440–1449).

² Doubtful antipopes (2). 1) Heraclius (309–310); and 2) Benedict IX (1445).

³ Antipopes improperly so called (9). 1) Peter, archpriest of Rome (686); 2) Theodore, priest of Rome (686); 3) Theodore, archpriest (687); 4) Stephen II, (752); 5) Theophylactus, Roman archdeacon (757); 6) Philip (768); 7) Zinzinus (?), Roman priest (824); 8) John, Roman archdeacon (844); 9) Anastasius, librarian, Roman priest (855).

Bibliography

1. Sources and Documentary Collections

Indispensable in any work of research on the history of the papacy are the papal acts and papal documents. A summary of them (not the integral text), in chronological order, may be found in *Regesta pontificum romanorum*, up to the year 1198, by F. Jaffé, second edition, edited by Löwenfeld and Ewald, two volumes, (Leipzig, 1885–88); and in its follow-up work, from the year 1198 to 1304, edited by A. Potthast, two volumes, (Berlin, 1874–75). The *Regesta pontificum romanorum* published by the Academy of Göttingen and edited by P. F. Kehr and others, instead, were arranged according to nations, cities, churches and persons receiving the documents. They contain many unpublished acts found after long and tedious research in all the public and the private archives of Europe. The section that concerns Italy (*Italia pontificia*) is an eight-volume work near completion.

There are also the records of the acts of the individual popes. Among them, those published under the initiative of the *Bibliothèque des écoles d'Athènes et de Rome* (Paris, 1884 and foll.) are of particular importance for what regards the popes from Gregory IX to Clement VI.

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The papal bulls are published in chronological order in various editions: *Magnum bullarium romanum*, from Leo I to Sixtus V, continued later up to 1670; *Bullarium privilegiorum ac diplomatum romanorum pontificum amplissima collectio* by C. Cocquaelines (Rome, 1774), continued up to Benedict XIV and later up to Pius VIII. As to the acts of more recent pontiffs, see the *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, the collection of *l'Osservatore Romano*, and of the *Civiltà Cattolica*. An extremely valuable source for the history of medieval papacy is the *Liber pontificalis*, critically edited by L. Duchesne with a long introduction and many notes, two volumes (Paris, 1886-92). Another important codex of the *Liber* was published by Father March (Barcellona, 1925).

Among the documentary collections we shall mention also *Epistolae romanorum pontificum usque ad Leonem Magnum*, edited by P. Coustant and continued by A. Thiel up to Pope Hormisdas (Braniewo, 1868); *Collectio Avellana*, papal letters from the year 367 to 533 (Vienna, 1898); *Acta romanorum pontificum*, from the year 90 to 1216, by the Sacred Congregation for the Oriental Church (Rome, 1930 and foll.); C. Kirch, *Enchiridion fontium historiae ecclesiasticae antiquae* (Freiburg im Br., 1910); C. Mirbt, *Quellen zur Geschichte des Papsttums und des römischen Katholizismus*, fourth edition (Tübingen, 1924); C. Silva-Tarouca, *Fontes historiae ecclesiasticae Medii Aevi* (Rome, 1930); *Raccolta di concordati su materie ecclesiastiche tra la Santa Sede e le autorità civili*, by Msgr. Angelo Mercati (Rome, 1919). The records of Gregory the Great, John VIII and Gregory VII and also the letters of many medieval popes are included in the various sections of the large collection *Monumenta Germaniae Historica*.

A source of exceptional importance for modern history of the papacy is the diplomatic correspondence between the Secretariat of State of the Vatican and its nuncios. This enormous

amount of material, liberally placed at the disposal of all scholars by Pope Leo XIII with the opening of the Vatican secret archives, is being gradually published by the scientific institutes of the various nations. Up to the present there is the *Nuntiaturberichte aus Deutschland* (from the year 1533 on) with more than thirty volumes. However, numerous and important documents from this source may be found also in important reviews or isolated books.

Strictly connected with the history of the popes is the history of the councils. Their decisions were collected by Labbe, by Coleti and above all by I. D. Mansi in his *Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio*, thirty-one volumes (Florence, Venice, 1757 and foll.). New critical editions are being published, among which we shall mention that of the Council of Trent by the *Goerresgesellschaft* in fourteen volumes, arranged in *Acta, Diaria, Epistolae, Tractatus* (Freiburg im Br., 1901–48). Then, too, the juridical collections must be included: *Quellensammlung zur kirchlichen Rechtsgeschichte und zum Kirchenrecht*, by E. Eichmann, three volumes (Paderborn, 1912); *Corpus Iuris Canonici* (*Decretum Gratiani, Decretalium collectiones*), edited by E. Friedberg (Leipzig, 1879–81); *Codex iuris canonici* (Rome, 1917). The official formulary of the Medieval Pontifical Chancery for its acts is to be found in the *Liber Diurnus*, published several times.

Precious contributions to the history of the papacy are found in the various volumes of the recent collection *Miscellanea Historiae Pontificiae*, published under the supervision of Gregorian University, Rome.

2. Works of General Character

Though not covering the entire chronological field of papal history, the following works may be considered of general interest. *Geschichte des Papsttums von des Anfängen bis zur*

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Höhe der Weltherrschaft by E. Caspar. This work was intended to be in four volumes, but only the first two—to the middle of the eighth century—were completed (Tübingen 1930–33). *Das Papsttum, Idee und Wirklichkeit*, by J. Haller, three volumes, up to Innocent III (Stuttgart, 1934–39); *Geschichte der papste*, by L. von Pastor—from the close of the Middle Ages; English translation, volumes 1–38 (St. Louis, 1915–1952). Of less critical value are *The Lives of the Popes* by H. K. Mann, twelve volumes (London, 1915–32) and *Storia dei Papi* by A. Saba-C. Castiglioni, two volumes (Turin, 1938–39). A brief synthesis is the small volume by F. Mourret, *La papauté*, published by Bibliothèque Catholique des sciences religieuses, seventh edition (Paris, 1929).

Abundant information is found in *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique* under the words "Papauté," "Pouvoir du pape," "Primauté du pape," "Infallibilité papale," and under the names of the various titulars. A beautiful historical and doctrinal synthesis is found also under the word "Papauté" in *Dictionnaire apologétique de la foi catholique*.

A place of particular interest is occupied by the work of M. Maccarrone on the concept of "vicariate" and the use of this term in Christian antiquity and in the Middle Ages " 'Vicarius Christi' e 'Vicarius Petri' nel periodo patristico," *Rivista di storia della Chiesa in Italia*, 1948; "Il papa 'Vicarius Christi.' Testi e dottrina del sec. XII al principio del XIV," *Miscellanea Paschini*, I (Rome, 1948). Naturally, all works of Church history treat amply of the popes and the ecclesiastical and curial organization. I shall mention only *Kirchengeschichte*, by J. P. Kirsch, two volumes (Freiburg im Br., 1931–40), and *Histoire de l'Eglise depuis les origines jusqu'à nos jours*, by A. Fliche and V. Martin, twenty-four volumes, twelve of which are available in the French edition and the first volume has been translated into English by E. C. Messenger (New York, 1949). *Con-*

ciliengeschichte, by K. J. Hefele, treats the councils rather extensively, even though it leans to conciliarist ideas. For this monumental work see the French edition with additions by O. Leclercq (Paris, 1907-40), continued by Richard up to the Council of Trent inclusively.

It is impossible to mention all the works which treat of the Papal State or deal with the charitable, social, artistic, and other activities encouraged by the Church and by the popes in particular in the course of the centuries (see Lallemand, Male, Chénon, Guiraud, Schnürer, etc.).

3. *Particular Subjects*

For the immense bibliography relative to the subjects treated in Chapter I, we refer the reader to F. M. Braun, *Nuovi aspetti del problema della chiesa*, Italian translation (Brescia, 1943), dealing with the authenticity of the Gospel text of Matthew 16:18, and other works mentioned therein. Even the Protestant F. Kattenbusch, in an article published in honor of A. Harnack, admitted the authenticity of that text. On the coming of Peter to Rome, see the noteworthy conclusions of H. Lietzmann, in *Petrus and Paulus im Rom, Liturgische und archäologische Studien* (Berlin, Leipzig, 1927). Among Catholic works, *Le memorie degli Apostoli Pietro e Paolo in Roma*, by O. Marucchi, fourth edition, under the supervision of C. Cecchelli (Turin, 1938); *Saint Pierre et les origines de la primauté romaine*, by M. Besson (Geneva, 1928).

About Peter and his writings: *Der petrinische Lehrbegriff*, by B. Weiss (Berlin, 1855); *L'oeuvre des apôtres*, by E. Le Camus (Paris, 1905); *St. Peter and the First Years of Christianity* by C. Fouard (London, 1927); "L'apostolat de S. Pierre à Rome," *Revue d'histoire et de littérature religieuses*, 1910, by P. Monceaux; *Vita S. Petri Apostoli*, by U. Holzmeister (Paris, 1936); *La Cristologia nella catechesi di S. Pietro*, by A. Vitti

(Milan, 1939); *Il Primato di S. Pietro negli atti degli Apostoli*, by E. Florit (Rome, 1942); *S. Pietro: l'uomo*, by S. Garofalo (Rome, 1943).

About the tomb of the Apostle and other archeological testimonies: Marucchi, *op. cit.*; "Il monumento apostolico della Via Appia," by P. Styger, *Dissert. Pont. Accad. Rom. di Archeologia*, ser. II, vol. XIII, 1918; *La tomba di S. Pietro*, by G. Wilpert (Rome, 1922) and other studies by the same author; *Memoria Apostolorum in Catacumbas*, by A. Prandi (Vatican City, 1936); "Gli Apostoli a Roma," by C. Cecchelli, *Arch. Deput. Rom. Storia Patria*, vol. LX, 1937.

Obviously, the preceding studies may have been superseded by the two recent publications concerning the new findings in the Vatican area, one by the commission in charge of the excavations, "Esplorazioni sotto la Confessione di S. Pietro," (Vatican City, 1951), the other "The Shrine of St. Peter and the Vatican Excavations," by Jocelyn Toynbee and John Ward Perkins (New York, 1957). Both works are of the greatest scientific value.

On the iconography of St. Peter, see *S. Pietro*, by C. Cecchelli, Rome (*Iconografia dei Papi a cura della Giunta centrale degli Studi storici*).

On the progressive affirmation of the Roman primacy in the first centuries of Christianity, besides the general works already mentioned, see P. Batiffol, *Primitive Catholicism* (London, 1912); Idem, *Cathedra Petri: Etudes d'histoire ancienne de l'église* (Paris, 1938); H. Grisar, *Roma alla fine del mondo antico secondo le fonti scritte e i documenti*, two volumes, new edition (Rome, 1930). In recent times, important acknowledgments by Protestant scholars are not wanting, although H. Koch continues to be strenuous opponent of papal primacy. In a series of studies (*Cathedra Petri. Neue Untersuchungen über*

die Anfänge der Primatslehre, Giessen, 1930) he has undermined the value of such acknowledgments.

About the lists of the Roman bishops: I. Chapmann in *Revue bénédictine*, vols. XVIII-XIX. The documents on the primacy were collected in *Textus antenicaeni ad primatum romanum spectantes* in *Florilegium patristicum*, under the supervision of G. Rauschen (Bonn, 1914). About the popes of antenicene centuries, see P. Brezzi, *S. Leone Magno* (Rome, 1946); Idem, "Gelasio I e il nuovo orientamento politico della chiesa romana," *Nuova rivista storica*, 1936.

The testimonies of the fathers in favor of the primacy: Marini, *Il primato di S. Pietro e dei suoi successori in Giovanni Crisostomo* (Rome, 1919); G. Soranzo, "Sant' Ambrogio e la chiesa romana," *Sant' Ambrogio nel XVI centenario della nascita* (Milan, 1940); P. Batiffol, *Le catholicisme de Saint Augustin* (Paris, 1929).

The importance of the papal action in the evolution of penitential praxis was illustrated by E. Goller, "Papsttum und Bussgewalt in spätrömischer und frühmittelalterlicher Zeit," in *Römische Quartalschrift*, vol. XXXIX, 1931.

Listed below are some works on several medieval popes, containing points relative to the history of the primacy, the idea of the papacy, the central church organization, etc.

H. Grisar, *S. Gregorio Magno*, Italian translation, new edition (Rome, 1928); O. Bertolini, *Roma di fronte a Bisanzio ed ai Longobardi* (Bologna, 1941); L. Duchesne, *Les premiers temps de l'état pontifical*, third edition (Paris, 1911); A. Lapôte, *L'Europe et le Saint-Siège à l'époque carolingienne: Le pape Jean VIII* (Paris, 1895); P. Brezzi, *Roma e l'impero medievale* (Bologna, 1947); A. Fliche, *Etudes sur la politique religieuse à l'époque de Grégoire VII*, two volumes (Paris, 1924-25), and various other studies on that period and on that pope; J. Gay, *Les papes du XI siècle et la chrétienté* (Paris,

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1926); or *Studi gregoriani*, collected by G. B. Borino, three volumes (Rome, 1947-48); P. Fournier-G. Lebras, *Histoire des collections canoniques en Occident depuis les fausses Décrétales jusqu'au Décret de Gratien*, two volumes (Paris, 1934); F. Hurter, *Storia del pontefice Innocenzo III*, Italian translation, three volumes (Milan, 1839-40); M. Maccarone, *Chiesa e Stato nella dottrina di papa Innocenzo III* (Roma, 1940); J. Rivière, "Le pape est-il un dieu pour Innocent III?" *Revue des sciences religieuses*, 1922; L. Tosti, *Storia di Dupré-Theseider, I Papi d'Avignone e la questione romana* (Florence, 1939); N. Valois, *La France et le grand schisme d'Occident*, four volumes (Paris, 1896-1904); P. Brezzi, "Il grande scisma d'Occidente come problema italiano," *Archivio Dep. romana di Storia Patria*, vol. LX, 1945.

About the complicated circumstances that led to the Eastern Schism: P. Bernardakis, "Les appels au pape dans l'église greque jusqu'à Photius," *Echos d'Orient*, vol. VI, 1903; L. Bréhier, *L'église et l'Orient au Moyen Age* (Paris, 1928); P. E. Herman, "Le cause storiche della separazione della chiesa greca secondo le più recenti ricerche," *La Scuola cattolica*, 1940; P. M. Jugie, *Le schisme byzantin* (Paris, 1941).

On conciliary ideas: N. Valois, *Le pape et le concile* (1418-50), two volumes (Paris, 1909); G. Hofmann, *Papato, conciliarismo, patriarcato* (Rome, 1940).

For modern times the volumes of L. Von Pastor are still a great source of information. For the Protestant point of view, see L. Ranke, *Die römischen Päpste ihre Kirche und ihr Staat im 16 und 17 Jahrhundert*.

Among the studies of a specific nature may be listed: E. Pontieri, "Il papato e la sua funzione morale e politica in Italia durante la preponderanza spagnola," *Archivio Storico italiano*, 1938; P. Brezzi, *La diplomazia pontificia* (Milan, 1942); J. Mueller, *Das Friedenswerk der Kirche in den letzten drei Jahr-*

hundertten (Berlin, 1927); V. Martin, *Le Gallicanisme et la réforme catholique* and also *Les origines du gallicanisme* (Paris, 1939); G. Soranzo, *Peregrinus apostolicus. Lo spirito pubblico e il viaggio di Pio VI a Vienna* (Milan, 1936). New light is thrown on the relations between Alexander VI and Savonarola by the documents recently published by the Accademia d'Oropa (Turin, 1950).

As to the nineteenth century, the work of von Pastor was continued by J. Schmidlin, *Papstgeschichte der neuesten Zeit*, four volumes (Munich, 1933–39).

Very numerous are the publications on particular points and personalities of that century. We shall limit ourselves to mentioning only a few references to the *Syllabus* and the Vatican Council: P. Viollet, *L'infallibilité du pape et le Syllabus* (Paris, 1904); E. Cecconi, *Storia del concilio ecumenico vaticano scritta su documenti originali* (Rome, 1873–79)—not finished; Th. Grandérath, *Geschichte des Vaticanischen Konzils* (Fribourg, 1903)—French translation, three volumes (Brussels, 1908–13). Almost all the writings on this subject reflect too much the position of the authors themselves and lack objectivity.

Great interest was evoked by the book by Balmes, *European Civilization: Protestantism and Catholicity Compared in Their Effects on the Civilization of Europe* (Baltimore, 1918) and the one by L. Veuillot, *Le parfum de Rome*, two volumes, fifth edition (Paris, 1865). With regard to the period 1918–1938, see M. Bendiscioli, *La politica della Santa Sede* (Florence, 1939).

Concerning the theology of the primacy, besides the articles in the *Dictionnaires* mentioned above, see K. Algermissen, *La Chiesa e le chiese*, second Italian edition (Brescia, 1944); C. Journet, *The Church of the Word Incarnate*, vol. I: *The Apostolic Hierarchy* (New York, 1955).

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